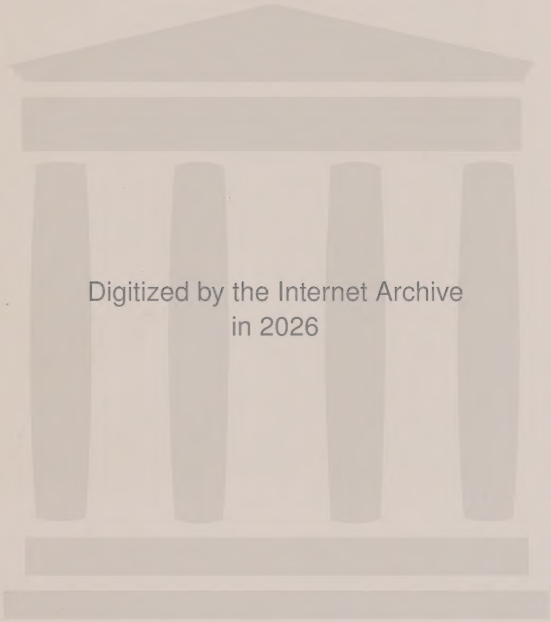
D.W. CHAPMAN

THE MEMOIRS OF THE
MARQUISE DE KEROUBEC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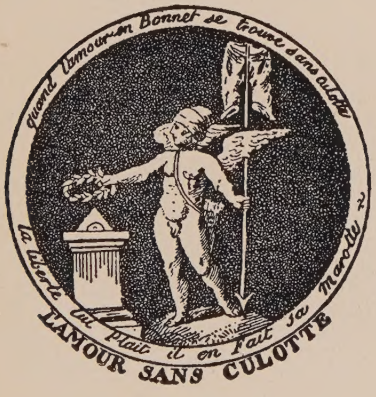
THE MEMOIRS OF THE MARQUISE DE KEROUBEC

(1785–1858)

BEING EXTRACTS FROM HER DIARIES
NOW PRESENTED TO ENGLISH
READERS FOR THE FIRST TIME



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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

It is hoped that English readers will find interest and amusement in this little volume of memoirs, which throws a new light on several curious social phases in France during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras. The memoirs are therefore presented in their entirety, and the editor has resisted the temptation to modify the text—even when the writer's *esprit gaulois* is more particularly in evidence.

The illustrations have been chosen from contemporary prints and caricatures; and by a lucky chance a portrait of the *Marquise* herself was discovered in a collection of miniatures of the period.

THE MEMOIRS OF THE MARQUISE DE KEROUBEC

I

To-day—it is the tenth day of August of 1785—my dear mother took both of us, Polydore and myself, to the town. We drove there in the big barouche, because she wanted to bring back a large embroidered chair—she has herself made the embroidery. And almost every time when she goes to the town she buys us each a present. For me she has bought this diary book and now for the remainder of my life I will on every day, before I go to bed, write what has happened all the day.

My mother knows very well. She says that we women must be calm and that I am too wild. With the help of God I will change myself. We must be calm, she says, because we have to live for so many months in the country, where there is little distraction. And

it

it is a very good affair, she says, if one writes letters or keeps a diary. I am so pleased to have this book.

As we drove towards the town my mother (dressed in the cream-coloured one—she says that people in our position must not be slovenly when they make a public appearance) and my brother Polydore, who is two years older than me, that is to say he is fifteen years of age, and my cousin Bernard, we were all very happy, since it was a fine day.

I am glad that Bernard is not yet old enough to be a Bishop (which my mother is going to have him made), because he is a very good schoolmaster. My mother was saying, as we drove along to-day, that she has decided views on the subject of education and that everybody should learn something, even people in our position. It was a very excellent arrangement, she said, that Bernard should have come just now to live at the castle. Otherwise she would have had to send for a stranger. As for my being under the tuition of a woman, she did not believe in that. And Cousin Bernard could use his spare time very well in studying the Sacred Writings and in being her chaplain.

'Oh, indeed, indeed,' cried Cousin Bernard—

I must

I must also say that his pale face was flushed—
'I am most grateful to you.'
'One thing,' said my mother, as she turned upon him her majestic eye, 'I do not wish you to be humble, like a poor rat of a country priest. Do not forget that you belong to our family, which makes this'—she looked as if there was an evil smell—'this cringing attitude distasteful to me. For the life of me I cannot think from where you got it.'
Cousin Bernard cleared his throat. 'I am very sorry,' he said, 'but I will try——'
'What the devil will you do when you are a Cardinal?' asked my mother. 'It will be too ridiculous. Have you never examined the picture of your great-uncle in the big drawing-room? He was a true Prince of the Church. See to it, my friend, that you become more like him.'
'But how can he?' said my brother, who was bursting into laughter. 'The great-uncle is like a statue, and—and—well, if Cousin Bernard washes himself one can see all his ribs.'
'Madame,' said Cousin Bernard in an anxious tone, 'I will do my best.'
'What do I hear?' she cried. 'You wash yourself! I never—Yvonne is with us and

we

we will not pursue the subject. But I should have thought that one who is in your holy profession would have known how to conduct himself. Ma foi! '—she was growing vehement—' suppose a person is confessing to you on account of impropriety. How can you dare to listen, you that—— Tell me, have you done this more than once? '

I glanced at Cousin Bernard through the corner of my eye. He was so utterly confused that he could hardly speak.

And Polydore assisted him. ' Mamma,' said he—I knew that he was enjoying himself mightily—' I can explain it all, because he told me. At his seminary there were some from England who behaved like that.'

' He imitated them. I understand,' observed my mother. ' Seemingly he was so proud of it that he permitted you to gaze at the extraordinary spectacle.' She shuddered. ' If he had been one of those young fops,' she said, ' who plume themselves on being not like other people! But a clergyman. It is too much. I am not sure that I ought not to speak to Monseigneur about it. Very speedily, young man, he would admonish you.'

' But—but—I beg you,' he stammered out.

' These

'These new-fangled ways! Do you promise me——'

'Oh yes, indeed I do. Never, so long as I live——'

My mother interrupted him. A little smile was hovering on her lips. 'I do not want you to make any reckless promises,' she said. 'Who knows but that in twenty, thirty years, when I am dead——'

'Incessantly I pray,' said Cousin Bernard, 'that you may live for many, many years.'

'I am obliged to you,' said my mother. 'But in the time to come it may be that this foreign habit will be introduced to our own country. It would then be proper that you should behave like all the rest. The manners which have made this land—and are we not more civilised than any other?—they will be discarded. Oh, my France, beloved France, the land of the fine flower of chivalry.'

She seldom had been moved like this. We others were embarrassed and we looked across the fields. . . . At last my mother spoke again. She said that we had been discussing an entirely different subject, that of dignity.

'Strip yourself of dignity,' she said, 'and then you are as good as naked. To be humble

before

before God is excellent, but to be humble before man—I trust,' she said to Cousin Bernard, 'that you will grow out of this.'

I believe she did not know herself how she was haughty in acknowledging the salutations of the peasants. They stood on the roadside and beyond it, bending, bowing as they always did, and I have never seen them look so gratified.

'It may be,' said Cousin Bernard—he was troubled—'it may be that I am influenced by the example of the early Christian martyrs. I have read the story of their lives not once but very often.'

'Whatever you have done,' my mother said, 'I recommend you earnestly to mould yourself upon the Cardinal.'

'But, forgive me, there is no book that I know of on his inner life.'

'That was his own affair,' my mother said. 'Mould your appearance upon his, as far as possible.'

The only other thing that I remember was the shouting of my mother to the coachman, which continued until we were on the outskirts of the town. My mother wanted to be told concerning his mad wife. Of course she

 always

A VISIT OF CHARITY

always has prescribed if anybody of our people is unwell. The coachman said it was too good of her to mix herself in this unhappiness.

'Since when have you become a courtier?' asked my mother. 'Has your wife infected you?'

She always is so vigorous and sensible. I hope I shall grow up to be like her.

II

This eleventh of August of 1785

THIS morning my mother took me to see the mad woman, though I would much sooner have gone with Polydore to shoot squirrels in the park, that is to say I would have watched him shooting them. I know that sometimes they take heavy sticks to beat the madness out of one; and perhaps they would do it when we were there, if she became excited. My mother, who always knows best, said that we must share our people's joys and sorrows. Therefore I set out with her. But as we drew near to the little grey house by the stable-yard, I ventured to enquire what good it was, our visit.

'It

'It is our duty,' she said, 'and who is that boy?'

Jean's nephew has only been here for about a week and to-day was the first time that my mother saw him. So I told her who he was. She remembered that Jean had asked for permission that the boy, Paul Garnier, might live with him. The father of Paul has been sent to the galleys for something little and there is no mother left.

'You seem to know all about him,' said my mother. 'Have you been talking to the lad?'

'That is all he told me,' I answered, 'and he is thirteen years old, like me.'

'He looks older,' she said. 'He is a handsome young scoundrel.' And she smiled benevolently at him.

I could have kissed her. The poor boy has been so wretched. From the time when his father was taken away, because he sometimes was a poacher, Paul has been wandering about. He wanted to avenge his father, but he did not know how to do it. And at last our coachman, Jean, who is his uncle, heard of him through some farmers and brought him, in rags and starving, to his own cottage, where he

says

says that he must stop. Paul is very brave. He does not wish to stop where he is sheltered, as he says. He wants to go out into the world. But what will he do there?

When my mother and I went in with Jean to look at his wife, who was lying on a mattress, fastened to it by a rope, the boy stood on the threshold. I remained with him—I put my hand in his, to show him that we would take care of him.

I saw the woman glaring at my mother; she attempted to get up. Her eyes were fierce and then were as the water of our lake before the rising of the sun. I lean out of my window looking at the dull grey surface if I wake up early.

There the woman lay and groaned.

'Poor creature,' said my mother. 'Would it not be preferable if we take her to the town? I would give commands to have her treated well.'

Then she began to curse my mother, hissing out vile words and blasphemies. Jean started to take off his belt to strike her, but my mother stopped him.

He went down upon his knees and kissed my mother's hand. 'How generous you are!'

he

he said. 'Madame la Comtesse, she does not recognise you, I am sure of that.'

For a time the woman was so turbulent that I could not hear what my mother said or Jean. I wished that my companion, Paul, could have run off with me into the park. He promised yesterday that he would show us, Polydore and me, the way to poach. It will be splendid. When I asked him first of all he hesitated. So I stamped upon the ground and said he must, because I ordered him. He thereupon looked straight into my eyes, and his blue eyes, they were so hard—I was astonished. Presently I threw my arms around his neck and kissed him. 'Will you do it, please?' I murmured. 'Yes,' said he.

And how much better if we could have been out there than in this room with the mad, raving woman.

III

This twelfth of August of 1785

How I laugh to think of those other girls of the neighbourhood who are being educated in

 convents!

convents! That is what would have happened to me if my mother had not got these ideas about Nature. We should be left much more, she thinks, to learn by direct experience and without books. To-day I heard them talking about that, she and a gentleman who lives on the other side of the town.

He said that she was adopting the ideas of Rousseau.

She denied it. 'He and I,' she said, 'we have the same ideas.'

'I myself,' said the gentleman, 'am an admirer of that man. Yet I think it is a fault that he lays so much emphasis on happiness. By taking his advice the children would grow up like little animals.'

'What else are they? And Bernard sees to it,' my mother said, 'that Polydore and Yvonne learn their grammar and the history of France.'

'Talking of Bernard, it appears to me,' said the gentleman—'it appears to me, if I may say so, Madame la Comtesse, that you are slightly illogical. With respect to your children you are all that is advanced and with respect to him you cling to the old ways.'

'But he is an ecclesiastic,' said my mother. 'Yes, I should like him to be like the Bishop

of

of Paris, Christopher de Beaumont,[1] who never would invite to his table a simple parish priest.'

'All I can say is,' remarked the gentleman, 'that I hope you will not be disappointed in your children.'

'Have no fear,' said my mother. 'I have considered everything. And though my daughter has a strain of wildness, that will pass.'

'But if it does not pass?' said he.

'I know her and she will not stray out of the road of virtue,' said my mother.

'May she follow in your footsteps,' said the gentleman.

Throughout this conversation, which took place upon a bench, my friend Paul Garnier

[1] This prelate (*b.* at the Château de la Roque in 1703, *d.* in 1781) is said by other chroniclers to have been noted for his generosity and Christian charity, but to have persecuted with the utmost zeal all those whom he considered to be foes of the Church, such as, for example, the Jansenists and the philosophers. He forbade his clergy to perform the funeral service for anyone of whom it was not proved that his confessor unreservedly accepted the decisions of the Holy See. His strictures against *Emile* produced the *Lettre à M. de Beaumont*, which is one of Rousseau's most powerful writings. In it the author shows that in asking for a free examination of religions he is more religious than his antagonists, who demand the help of the secular arm and the occasional application of measures of reprisal.—*Trans.*

and

and you can sit upon the steps of it for hours and hours and gaze at all the prospect, the green fields, the brown ones and the royal road from Paris that runs down into the valley and then up until it nearly is as high as La Garuche. He knew what I was going to say. We had not found ourselves together since we lay behind that bench.

Perhaps—I thought of this as soon as we were on the way—perhaps I really ought not to discuss my mother. But he was informed as much as I was. Well, I also felt that I must tell him to preserve our secret.

Yet it was not easy for me to begin and I was very glad, when we came to the row of nut-trees, that he said he would climb up into the branches and shake down a pocketful of nuts. We might have gone back for a ladder, but before I could propose it he was several metres from the ground. While he was in the tree I could arrange how to begin about my mother and the gentleman.

How splendidly he climbed, just like a cat. And as I was admiring him he started to send down the fruit. Because they were such large ones he was frightened he would hurt me.

But I laughed. 'Go on! go on!' I cried.

'And

'And if you hurt me I will smack you afterwards.'

He saw that I was in good spirits. He commenced to sing. And so did I. He waved the branches up and down, which made me dance. And Paul was laughing. I am not sure when a nut descended on my hand if he had thrown it on me or if it had only fallen down. I picked it up and tried to hit him with it. How the sun was shining in his hair! I told him he had shaken off as many nuts as we could eat. So let him come down quickly. We would gather them.

He was half singing as he clambered down and as he searched amid the grass. Then I was sorry that I had not settled how we could begin to talk about my mother and the gentleman.

He sang more lustily and I joined in. This we continued while he put the nuts inside his shirt. The others I put in my handkerchief.

'And now,' I cried, 'now I will race you up to La Garuche.'

He said he did not know the way.

'That makes it fair,' I answered. 'You can run so fast, you are so strong. The place is over there, in that direction.'

'I would sooner go with you,' he said.

And

And so I started running and he ran behind me. At the bottom of that field we rushed across the wooden bridge; but as the path goes up from there so steeply I was out of breath. I did not want him to perceive that I was tired. So I sat down, while saying that the place was good for the consuming of our nuts. And there among the bushes, as we sank down side by side, we were alone.

The nuts were very hard for me to crack, because my hands were trembling so. Then Paul put his hands over one of mine and helped me. His were cool and firm. We broke the nut.

'You ought not to have run so fast,' he said. 'Your hands are like two leaves.'

'Oh, that,' I said, 'is nothing.' But I did not tell him that my body was all over like a leaf, a leaf in a great wind.

'We can eat my nuts first and yours afterwards,' he said.

His shirt was open, yet I did not dare to put my hand in. But he looked so splendid and I thought that there was no necessity for me to touch him. For some time I was extremely careful not to do so. And it was not my fault, after we had eaten all the nuts which one could see, that others had slipped down.

V

This twentieth of June of 1787

It is nearly two years since I wrote in this book. I have not neglected it because I was afraid that my mother or anybody else would read it. She promised, when first she gave it me, that it should be for no one else's eyes. She told me—not then, it was later on—that people either do things which are reprehensible or write about them; and the writing did less injury to one, she said.

'But those,' I asked, 'who read that sort of thing?'

'Anyhow, my little mouse,' she said, 'you need not agitate yourself. With you it will not even be the writing that is wrong. If everybody's writings were as innocent as yours!'

'And so you promise me,' said I, 'that nobody will read them?'

'Not a soul!' she smiled. 'If I catch Polydore he shall be punished.'

She herself forgot about this diary of mine, and Polydore became a colonel, since my mother bought a regiment for him when he was seventeen years of age.

We were so glad, my mother and myself and Cousin Bernard. She invited a large company to meet together at the castle, where they toasted him with clamorous enthusiasm. I felt proud of my one brother. But the next time that I was with Paul, on the next day, he said it was an outrage to demand of war-scarred officers, with twenty years perhaps of toil and decorated with Saint Louis' Cross,[1] to be at the command of Colonel Polydore. He really was most bitter.

I retorted angrily that it was no concern of his. How ludicrous of him to speak, because one's ancestors on both sides have to be of noble blood. No sooner had I said this than I was ashamed.

But Paul did not appear to notice that I was upset. He stamped upon the ground and he declared that it must all be changed, that he would change it. Well, these sentiments of his were all in harmony with those I knew of. Ever since we found each other he had told

[1] This Order was founded in 1693 by Louis XIV, who meant it for officers of his army who practised the Catholic religion and who were also distinguished on account of their virtues and of services rendered. In 1789 the Order was suppressed. From 1816–1830 it again existed, but after that it finally disappeared.—*Trans.*

me

me his ambitions, which were most tremendous. I did not repeat them to a single person, as I did not want him to be laughed at. Here was Paul, our coachman's nephew, saying that we lived with wrongs all round us and that he would never rest till he had thrown himself into the fray.

I soothed him. I was frightened that my dear companion would march out upon the high road and perform some foolish act, so that he would be dragged off to the town to prison.

Frequently when we were by ourselves he had burst out in fire and fury against—nearly against everything, it sounded so. He did not make an exhibition of these sentiments at other times. In fact he kept for me that side of him, as well as that which was affectionate; and he was thought by others to be a reserved and serious boy. What he could never hide was the great beauty of his person. People would remark upon it now and then; but I said nothing.

As for his exasperation, when he talked to me about the common folk and the great despotism of the nobles and a hundred other things of that kind, I discovered a good way, when I had had enough, to keep him quiet. All I had

to

"ANCIEN RÉGIME"

to do was to raise up the subject of my husband. Paul and I knew perfectly that I would get some nobleman, but this would make the poor boy feel so miserable. I said I would close up my lips if he, for his part, would not spend the time on all those wrongs. I much preferred to have him talking and behaving differently, which he did very well.

There was no need for me to write this book, for I have had my Paul, and what with him and with my mother and with Cousin Bernard I have been quite happy.

That reminds me of the music-teacher from the town, who came here several times last autumn, for my mother said that it would do no harm if I could play some instrument. Why should we not make use of the spinet which stood behind the statue in the drawing-room? And so the pale professor with the melancholy face was teaching me. One day when Cousin Bernard, who was always with us, had departed for a moment, the professor looked so melancholy that I thought he would begin to weep, and then he said that one could not produce the best of music if there was no tragic sorrow in one's heart.

'What do you mean?' said I.

'Hush

'Hush, hush——' the door was opening and Cousin Bernard came into the room—'another time,' he whispered.

It sounded interesting and I did not want to wait. That evening I therefore asked my mother and she pursed her lips in a peculiar fashion.

'Did you tell him,' she enquired, 'that you have no tragic sorrow?'

'I did not say anything at all,' I said.

'Well,' she declared emphatically, 'you have nothing of the kind. I will send Jean to-morrow evening with a note. That gentleman shall not come here again, because he says himself that you will not produce the best of music. We are warned in time.'

VI

This seventh of July of 1789

It seems to me that if I do not write about what happened yesterday, then I shall never write again. To start at the beginning, I was in the room with Cousin Bernard, learning history. We are still at the fourteenth Louis. Cousin Bernard knows about him very well and I am

just

just as pleased to study him as any other of our monarchs. It so chanced my teacher was expounding to me that when Louis was an old, a broken man he was superb. His family, first one and then another of them, died; the darkness gathered over him, bad news from everywhere—and Louis was immovable. Upon his lips no word of——

'By the way,' said Cousin Bernard, 'I would like to ask you to move less yourself. It is a little disconcerting for my eloquence to see you roll eternally from side to side.'

The afternoon was warm and I lay stretched upon some cushions on the floor. But, as I still was suffering from the heat, I threw myself about.

'Dear Cousin Bernard, I will do my best,' I said. 'Please tell me more about the king.'

'But will you recollect one solitary word?'

I gave him a salute, as one salutes an officer.

'Then I proceed,' he said. 'He was a marvellous example of submission to the will of God.'

'Do you yourself remember what he said,' I asked, 'when he had lost his wife, the queen? Because I know. He said it was the only pain that she had ever caused him.'

'Blessed are the folk,' said Cousin Bernard,

'who

'who submit themselves to the decrees of the Almighty.' And he crossed himself.

'I am not sure,' said I—this kind of talk was pleasanter on such a sultry day than hearing Cousin Bernard plough his path through the campaigns—'I am not so sure,' said I, 'that the great king was blessed. Perhaps God would not bless him after all, he was so hard and stern.'

My cousin looked at me without approval.

'You are stern as well,' said I. 'And I am sorry. I will talk no more.' With that I seized a little yellow cushion and I let it lie across my mouth.

'Moreover, when he lived,' said Cousin Bernard, 'there existed people—and in Paris, where they are the most illuminated of the land—not only did they hold that he was blessed, but in the Place des Victoires [1] they adored his effigy.'

[1] This, one of the finest squares in Paris, was constructed by a courtier, the Duc de La Feuillade, for the purpose of containing a magnificent statue of Louis XIV. 'Viro Immortali' was the inscription. As to the adoring of Louis in that square, this happened at any rate when the duke inaugurated the statue, for he rode round it three times, followed by his regiment of guards, and each time he dismounted and prostrated himself. He subsequently strove, but without success, to obtain permission for his own burial under the statue.—*Trans.*

'I wish

'I wish I had been there!' I said. And just as I was stretching out my legs and arms there came from somewhere a great noise. Of course I made a leap towards the window and pushed back the shutters. Underneath, down in the courtyard, was a company of people, common people, men and women. They were so excited that they did not know what next to do. I recognised a few of them, our farmers and their women. Many faces were of strangers. One of them had round his body a green apron and he waved his arms about. Some of the others listened to him. An old woman with a crutch was wailing. Some had in their arms a pile of faggots or long staves.

Then Cousin Bernard peered across my shoulder and withdrew into the room. 'It is an insurrection! Draw the shutters to!' he cried.

'But why should there be an insurrection?' I demanded. 'What is it about?'

'Come back and I will tell you.' He was pulling at my dress. 'These things,' he said, 'you do not understand them. There is discontent in many parts.'

So it was true what Paul had often told me of the people's wrongs. Yet our own people did

not

not have to suffer, I was sure. I visited them sometimes with my mother and she always asked them what they wanted.

If she were here, I thought—she had gone to the town—she would arrange it all. 'What can we do?' I asked. 'We must do something.'

Cousin Bernard's eyes were like those of a rat.

'Be quick,' I said, 'or I will go without you. I will talk to them.'

'What will you say?'

'The good God knows,' I answered. 'Whatsoever comes into my head.'

By this time one could hear ferocious howls. And Paul was shouting! But why was he there? I rushed up to the window.

There he stood outside the door, his arms against it; several of the men were brandishing their lighted staves. They would have burned the door if he had not prevented them. A stream of blood was trickling from his forehead. My beloved Paul! I hailed him. For a moment he glanced up. Then he was fighting valiantly again.

'I will come down to you!' I cried.

He shook his head.

But I made off, with Cousin Bernard after me—

and

and by the little, winding staircase, down the narrow passage and then out into the open air. I had to run round half the castle, and for Cousin Bernard I must say that he came after me in order to protect me.

When we dashed into the courtyard there was a cadaverous, grim person who had gathered many of the people round him. His black hair was very long and underneath his brilliant eyes were shadows. When he spoke it was as if the words were hissing snakes. He told them that the time had come, that they would liberate themselves for ever from their chains, that they would stamp upon the nobles, wipe them out like noxious herbs. He had been sent expressly with these happy tidings. On his face there glittered a triumphant look.

'So you will drag the tyrants down!' he cried. 'At last—at last!'

'What do you think of him?' exclaimed the shrill voice of a woman. 'He shall be our general.'

Others shouted that there was no time to lose, the soldiers would be coming. Let them burn this house and run away.

'The soldiers! But they are with us! When I left Paris,' sang out the cadaverous one, 'the

French Guard [1] was with you. They are your brothers. They—they——' He was so excited that he could not frame the words.

'That the French Guard may live!' screamed someone.

'Man, what else are you in Paris doing?'

There was such a tumult that he could not answer. People were disputing with each other. That old man with the green apron—he is from the village—shouted that we should be careful. Anyhow the ringleaders would go to prison.

'Will you listen to me?' shouted the cadaverous fellow; and his long, thin forefinger was pointed at us all. 'I say the prisons are thrown open and the octroi barriers have been burned. We show you what to do, you others. You need only follow. Follow us, the land is yours!'

[1] For a long time the Gardes françaises had not been really the guards of the King. They had their quarters in Paris, in the different suburbs, and were thus in contact with the people. When the Revolution broke out they made it clear that they were not in sympathy with the monarch. This attitude was partly due to their convictions, partly to the fact that they were rivals of the Gardes du corps and of the Swiss guard, partly to their being seduced by the citizens and partly with a view to the advantages that might accrue to them.—*Trans.*

In the commotion that came after this, the speaker, looking round the courtyard, happened to catch sight of us.

'Ho you, the priest!' he called. 'I welcome you. The lower clergy have been joining us. They are poor devils too. What is your name, my friend?'

The man of the green apron answered him that he was making a mistake, because the priest was of the family. 'And we are fond of them,' he added.

'You sad fools.'

The windmill man and farmer Petitgras and several others of our people were in one part of the courtyard now. They said that it was true, that they were fond of us. We had been very kind to them.

'Indeed!' said the grim fellow. 'Do you know by chance if in this house they eat the bread of oats and barley such as you have? Do they live on rotten fruit? Do they restrict themselves to meat three times a year and do they often have no salt? Pray tell me that?'

'I tell you, they are kind to us,' said Petitgras. 'But they are all aristos! We have no time to enter into details.'

Paul had placed himself beside me. But the one

to

to speak was Cousin Bernard. 'It is not impossible,' he said, 'to enter into details. God does not confuse one sparrow with another.'

'And for that,' he sneered, 'you guarantee? Oh, slimy priest, is that the only useful knowledge you possess?'

Then I came to the help of Cousin Bernard. I would not look on, I said, to see him treated badly. He had been for years our schoolmaster, and: 'If,' I said—'if you know half as much about French history as he does, I congratulate you.'

Hereupon the man laughed loudly, but with grimness underneath it. 'Well, I am quite reasonable,' he declared. 'We have not all made up our minds about the burning of this house. So it shall wait for half an hour. The priest can lecture us.'

A few of his companions did not wish for this. They were impatient. And to listen to a young aristo, it was monstrous.

'But, my friends,' the chief man said, 'one item of our programme is the education of the people. Let the priest exhibit to us how he does it; and if we are satisfied, then he shall be appointed to some school.'

'The people,' somebody objected, 'cannot

read

read or write and you would have them learn old history, as if in preparation for the bachelor's degree.'

A smile was on the grim one's face. 'A thousand years ago,' he said, 'there used to be a minstrel singing underneath an oak tree of the memorable deeds of old. If you insist we can give orders that the priest shall always teach his lessons underneath an oak.'

He sat down and the others gradually followed his example; and as I sat down myself I urged my cousin to obey. It would be best for all of us, I whispered.

'Gentlemen and ladies, shall I talk to you,' asked Cousin Bernard, 'of our history? The period of the fourteenth Louis is the part I know the best.'

The woman with the crutch became courageous. She was beating it upon the ground. 'My grandfather lived then,' she said. 'He was a soldier. May he rest in peace.'

'Where did he fight?' asked Cousin Bernard. 'In that reign the glorious arms of France were carried everywhere. The Netherlands and Spain and——'

'Oh, I cannot tell you where he went,' she said, 'but he was in the mighty army.'

Then

Then the man of the green apron said that he had always longed to be a soldier. 'Now it is too late,' said he.

'Go on, you priest,' said the cadaverous man.

'Well, I can tell you of the Netherlands campaign,' said Cousin Bernard. And he told the story with great vehemence and passion—it astounded me. He was beside himself. And very soon he started to infect his audience. They uttered little cries of pleasure as he spoke of Louis' overwhelming forces. When he told how Louis took the field in person, various members of the audience were so excited that they leaped on to their feet. And one of them began to sing the ancient marching-song. Those who had wooden staves held them exactly as if they were muskets. They threw out their legs and started tramping, tramping round the courtyard. Everyone or nearly everyone was singing. Farmer Petitgras had placed himself in front and as he marched them out into the park and through it one could say that they were singing rapturously. The old woman with the crutch was hobbling after them. So Paul and I assisted her, we placed our hands beneath her elbows. But a cart was going to the village and we put her into it.

 Then

Then we turned back. I put my arm through his. I knew he did not want to speak.

VII

This eleventh of July of 1789

MARQUIS OF KEROUBEC is the name. At last my mother has informed me. She invited me to visit her this morning in her room while she was being dressed. Her head had not yet been arranged at all and when she is like that I always think that she is rather pitiable.

'My dear mamma,' said I.

'Come here, my little one,' she said; and I sank down upon a footstool which was at her side. Then very gently she began to stroke my arm. Her woman was at work on something in the room and near to us there stood the coachman, for the ordinary regulation of the matters which concern him.

'Jean was telling me,' she said, 'that all this trouble is not over. If those things are true which I have just been hearing, then who knows what else may happen?'

'Madame la Comtesse,' said he—his eyes were staring out—'I promise you that it is accurate.

 Not

Not more than fifteen leagues from here, at Chaulnes, some gentlemen were hunting with their horses and their dogs. Perhaps they did do damage to the peasants' little gardens and they broke their hedges—but it always has been so. This time the peasants ran off to the mayor; and when he put them into prison all their comrades in the village broke out into blasphemy and insults. They accused the mayor of being very friendly with those gentlemen, they said that he and they would never touch a scrap of meat on Friday and that on the Sunday he invariably goes to Mass. Ah yes, the peasants dare to talk, they have become as bold as possible.'

'They must be punished,' said my mother.

'In the commune of Saint Maxime,' said the coachman, 'the inhabitants have always paid an annual amount to the Abbey of Thoronet in order to be permitted to bake bread in the ovens [1] they have built. There is no oven at

[1] This feudal right went back no further than the 11th century. In the *Établissements de Saint-Louis* we read that: 'se aucuns hons avait moulin, qui eut *voière* (*vicaria*) en sa terre et qu'il ait hommes estagiers, ils doivent moudre à son moulin tuit cil qui son dedans la banlieu.' In the following centuries this right became restricted. The Royal Order of 1629, art. 207, says: 'Défendons aux seigneurs et gentilshommes d'assujettir

 the

the Abbey—and because the monks do not use their privilege of building an oven they compel the people to pay them an additional tax. What do you think, Madame la Comtesse? Some of the peasants have banded themselves together and have declared they will not pay. So what does one do? The King's officer entered the houses of these persons, took them to the prison, bound them, manacled them, removed their shoes and left them with the murderers.'

'It is all very distressing,' said my mother. 'You can leave us now, Jean. And if you hear of any other outbreaks, do not fail to let me know.'

He was on the point of going when my mother asked if he considered that it would be safe to drive across to La Sellière. If so, she wanted him to drive me there in a short time.

'Nobody will hurt Mademoiselle. I am sure of that,' said Jean.

'Very well,' said my mother. 'And it seems

leurs vassaux et tenanciers à leurs moulins, fours et pressoirs, s'ils ne sont fondés en titres. . . .' In that case, however, and until the Revolution the lord (or monastery) could confiscate the flour or bread of any offending person. It was likewise permitted to inflict a fine.—*Trans.*

to

to me, after what happened the other day, that we are as safe on the high road as in our own parks. You may leave me now. And you also,' she added, as she turned to her woman. 'But, oh Madame la Comtesse!' the woman cried in great despair, 'I beg you, let me make your toilette first. Suppose the wicked peasants were to burst in here and find you so!' 'Be off with you!' said my mother. 'This toilette is quite good enough for them. Now, do you hear me?' She had seized the miniature of my dead father, as if she was going to hurl it at the woman.

When we were alone she first of all replaced the miniature upon the little table at her elbow. As she gazed at it she sighed. She never had been wont to speak to me about my father; when she thought of him she sighed.

'If your dear father,' she said, 'had not been taken from us I would not have such a great responsibility towards you. It is time, my little Yvonne, that you marry. I have thought about it with the greatest care and, by the grace of God, a very fine young man has said that he is willing.'

'But he has not seen me! Has he seen me?' I demanded.

 'He

'He has heard of you and is that not enough? Oh yes, I recognise that everything has changed since I was in the same position. It was on a Monday that they brought me from the convent. On Wednesday I beheld your father. All the articles had been drawn up. There was a dinner one day of the week, when members of the family assembled. It was the next Monday that we went to church. I know, I know, my dear, that persons of our modern way of thinking would not care for such a programme. I believe as much as anyone in sentiment. So you shall have an opportunity of seeing him before we settle everything.'

'How good you are!' said I.

She nodded amiably. 'And more than that,' she said. 'I want you to drive over to La Sellière and have a talk with Adrienne de Morival. She is your generation more than I am, after all. And she is a most worthy creature; very pious and with half a dozen children, though she is so young. It will be a nice——'

'Do tell me,' I burst in, 'if he is handsome.'

'They assure me that he is most satisfactory,' she answered, 'but I have not seen him yet. All the negotiations have been carried on

through

through common friends of the two families. It will be nice, as I was going to say, for you to have a talk with Adrienne about the married state. The neighbours that we have in this part are so dull that we see little of them. And if Adrienne is slightly dull herself she will regale you with the best advice. Now leave me, my beloved, I am suffering from my emotions.' She leaned back and closed her eyes.

'Please pardon me,' I said, 'but——'

'Oh yes,'—she looked at me through her lashes—'it will be the best,' she said, 'if you get married in the middle of next week. With these disturbances one never knows. Pray give my warm regards to Adrienne.'

'Is it permitted that I hear his name?' I asked.

'You have forgotten to——'

'Oh certainly. The Marquis de Keroubec. He is excellent from every point of view. But you will see that for yourself, and he has fifty-seven thousand *livres* income. Since he does not gamble it will be sufficient. He has an old house away in Brittany and he has bought for you a pretty one, a small one, in the fashionable part of Paris.'

Naturally I would have put many other

 questions

questions to my mother if she had looked less exhausted. Adrienne de Morival might tell me more.

As I was on the way to La Sellière I was regretting that I was not very fond of Adrienne. I always had regarded her as dreary. Anyhow she did not interest me in the least. Her occupation was to be a mother and to do embroideries for the Church. I never once had heard her speak of other things. But she was going to talk to me about my marriage and perhaps she knew the marquis.

Very closely did I scan her face as I was brought into her presence. She was in a much more animated, merry mood than usual. When we were in her little room I put at once the questions as to whether he was young and handsome.

'So much so,' she said, 'that he looks more like a lover than a husband.'

Was this Adrienne de Morival? Did I hear correctly?

'Enviable that you are,' she said, 'to have a house in Paris too. There it is life! Men come and go. You probably will have your husband going with a lady of the Opera. Be sure he has a box for you on Fridays. Oh, I

wish

wish that I could spend more time in Paris. I should know exactly how to spend it. There is a fine choice of lovers.'

In my head the thoughts were flying round and round. 'Why did you never tell me this before?' I asked.

'What was the use? Your mother never took you to the capital. You would have made yourself quite ill with longing.'

Her description of the Marquis was too vague, because she only once had met him. On the other hand I was relieved that she and he were not more intimate.

She laughed. 'And now you must admit,' she said, 'that I have not been unsuccessful, for I have deceived both you and the Comtesse.'

'Have you deceived me too,' I asked, 'in your advice? Or does a married woman always have a lover if she lives in Paris?'

'Well,' said Adrienne in a judicial sort of way, 'there may be one or two exceptions. But is it good taste, I ask, to make oneself conspicuous?'

When I returned I had a very interesting interview with Paul. I told him that he need not be at all disturbed because I was about to marry.

VIII

This twenty-ninth of July of 1789

It is now a week precisely since the Marquis came. But how was I to know that the poor, limping wanderer was in reality the Marquis? He arrived when one could scarcely see the avenue. I got up from my bed to find out why the dogs were barking. They were very savage. Usually when I call them they obey at once, but this time they were frantic. I was thankful that my mother never would allow them to be left unchained, as one does elsewhere, for they surely would have torn to pieces any vagabond or poacher. They paid just as much attention to my shouting as did the grey, indifferent water of the lake or the dark mass of overhanging trees. . . . And then upon the avenue I saw the figure of a man. As he came forward, very slowly, leaning on a stick, I knew that he was not a robber. He was in distress? How could I help him? Then I lit a candle, held it up, and when he noticed me I signalled that he was to wait. I would come down.

As

As fast as possible I put a pair of shoes on and a cloak. Then I ran to a servant's room, awakened him and made him go with me.

I thought immediately when we had reached the stranger, that here was a most deserving case; he had such dark, romantic eyes.

'Excuse me that I come at this hour of the night,' he said.

The servant made a little noise. He had proposed to speak, but changed his mind.

'I am a dancing-master. Larenture is my name. I come from Paris,' said the man.

'You look as if you had walked all the way,' I said. 'But you must tell us everything when you have slept.'

'They say that Paris is in flames,' began the servant.

'Not the whole of it,' the dancing-master said. 'You are too pessimistic. I could tell you, though, about a friend of mine who was away from Paris where he lives. A message reached him from some persons who offered him two *livres* for his whole apartment. When he said that this was ludicrous and lacking in the elements of wit the messenger said No. He said two *livres* was the present value of the

 place

place, because those persons of the letter had just burned it.'

This was the kind of man, I felt, who would endure his own misfortunes just as airily as those of other people. If a carriage had appeared that moment I would have been very glad to spend all the remainder of the night in driving with him round the country, though that is a thing which I have never done with anybody. I was fascinated. But, of course, the poor man had to go to bed. I left him in the servant's care and went back to my room. Then, till the morning, I was either being whirled through lovely dreams or else was looking out upon the avenue where I had first seen this delightful man. And then the dogs would growl or give an isolated bark, as if they too were dreaming.

'Well, well,' said my mother, as I went quite early to her room, 'what is all this about a man from Paris?'

'Monsieur Larenture,' said I. In all my dreams I certainly had not imagined that he was the Marquis de Keroubec. 'And he is a dancing-master,' I explained, for lack of something else to say. I knew my mother would already have been told.

'It

'It is to be regretted,' she observed, 'that he did not arrive a little sooner. Next week when you marry you will go away.'

'But, dear mamma!'

'We live in such a time,' she said, 'when it is better to be married.'

'And why now particularly?' I enquired.

'Well, it is always better,' said mamma. 'Monsieur de Keroubec will very shortly be with us. But in the meantime if this dancing-master can instruct you, I am sure that it would please de Keroubec. When the disturbances in Paris have been quelled you will be going to that house of his; and then there will be functions where one dances. You can ask this man to stay until the Marquis comes. I also hear he has no clothes,' she said. 'Tell them to put out some of the civilian clothes of Polydore.'

When, later on, I met our guest, I easily persuaded him to stay with us and give me lessons. It would be the best that he could do, he said. He only wanted first to pay the Comtesse his respects.

But as he still was lame—he had not walked, he said, the whole way, but considerable pieces of it—I declined to have a lesson

until

until he had told us all the news of Paris.

'I would sooner dance,' he said. 'It is exasperating to have furnished a nice, little house and then, because of the Bastille—you know that the Bastille has fallen?—be compelled to run away.'

So then the rumours we had heard were true. The mob had really taken the Bastille and let the criminals all out. But when they had been captured and put somewhere else, then surely life in Paris would again be pleasant and he would be able to return?

'I fear,' he said—and he was smiling through his sadness, 'that in this part of the country your political ideas are—may I call them hazy?'

'But my mother is not hazy in the least,' I said, 'as you will see.'

He still was smiling. 'What you said of the Bastille,' quoth he, 'was so delightful. Doubtless Madame la Comtesse has mapped it out.'

I was a little hurt that he should treat my mother as a child. And so I told him forthwith that she was a woman of affairs and that she could conduct them like a man. I said she even knew how many thousand *livres*

were

were possessed by him whom I was going to marry.

'Let us hope,' said he, 'that it is a substantial sum.'

'Fifty-seven thousand *livres*,' I replied. 'It is enough, my mother says, because he does not gamble. But why should I tell you all these things about myself?'

At any rate I said no more, as we were then requested to go where my mother was; and then for several hours we listened to the gentleman's adventures. It was wonderful to hear him.

In the afternoon, as we were sitting in the park, my mother fell asleep—a handkerchief upon her face—and then he said that we might start the lessons. I was very willing. Like a courtier, as the artists paint them, he stood opposite to me and bowed. He then stood upright, very gracefully, and lifting up a leg he twirled it in the air.

'But I shall never dance like that!' I said. 'It is a hundred times too difficult.'

He placed himself beside me, with a hand beneath my elbow; and he sang in a faint voice—he did not wish to wake my mother, though it soon was evident that she was

 sleeping

sleeping very soundly. Well, he murmured one of the sweet songs that everybody knows. It helped me a great deal and something else which helped me was that the instructor did not seem to notice any of my clumsiness. He caught me in his arms whenever I was on the point of falling and when he believed I was. So we continued—probably for a long time—I lost all count of it.

'Who is that youth who stares so hard?' my master was enquiring.

How long Paul had been there on the watch I do not know. His face was like a thunderstorm. Then, as we looked at him, he turned upon his heels and strode away.

'A curious young man,' my master said.

'It is Paul Garnier,' said I, 'the coachman's nephew.'

'Do you mean to tell me,' said my master, 'that a coachman's nephew dares to be so insolent? I think I must run after him and——'

'Monsieur Larenture, for my sake,' I entreated, as I held him back.

'But is it wise?' he asked. 'You have not seen the populace of Paris—and of other places too—as I have. They are savage

beasts

beasts. And this is the beginning, this young man who has entirely cast aside all proper conduct. You are generous, far too generous, Mademoiselle. One has to stamp upon the serpent's eggs.' My master tried to free himself from me.

'But you are going to murder him,' I cried. 'You shall not murder him!'

'Oho!' My master stared at me. 'What have we here? Why are you so solicitous for that young scoundrel?'

I could see that he knew all my private business. Somehow he had guessed it. I decided very swiftly not to show my anger at this prying—for a stranger and a dancing-master it was surely more than I need bear—but I would win him over by conversing with him as a woman of the world. And so I told him that it was as he surmised and that when I was married this young man was going to be my lover.

IX

This third of August of 1789

My mother has her correspondents in the capital and at Versailles and also at some

castles

castles. She goes rarely to these places, since she holds that life in them is always growing more extremely artificial and she has no time to waste. So she prefers to be at home with her embroideries and water-colours and the gentleman who comes from time to time and calls her Françoise when they are alone. I must acknowledge that the letters which she has—or does she not read all of them to me?—describe a most monotonous routine. And now, just when the letters would be much more thrilling, since we get a quantity of rumours every day of what is done in Paris and in other places, now we do not have the slightest little letter.

'Well, you can no longer say,' I was remarking to my mother, 'that the life in other places is monotonous.'

'Apparently you speak the truth,' she said.

'It is our own life,' I deplored, 'which is so dull.'

But here I wandered from the truth. We had a drama only yesterday which was terrific. . . . If this diary of mine is seen by someone after I am dead, I hope he will not smile at me for having treated my affairs so seriously instead of the affairs all over France. But they, if

they

they are as important as we hear, will be the subject of a thousand pens.

It was no use my talking reasonably to Paul. He fretted and he fretted. When I told him to explain himself he simply hung his head. I would have been quite angry if I had not seen a tear-drop in his eye.

'But you dear, stupid one!' I said, 'what is it that you want?'

I had much trouble in persuading him to speak, and then he muttered that he was a peasant, he was nothing.

'You are talking nonsense,' I replied. 'You know what I have promised you.'

He shook his head.

'And you do not believe me? After all that——'

He looked very wistful. 'It is not your fault,' he said. 'I know you cannot think of me when there is someone of another kind.'

'But, Paul,' I said, 'you do not seem to understand. I love you.'

He bent down and kissed my fingers and then ran away. I shouted after him, but he ran on and on. We subsequently heard that he had gone back to his uncle's cottage very late that evening; and in the night he vanished.

 When

When my mother was informed it made her very angry, as she did not like the smallest thing on the estate to happen if she had not been consulted. In her anger she declared—we others were about to start a dancing-lesson in the same place of the park where we had been on previous occasions—she declared, as she rushed in upon us, that this world was an abomination and that Monsieur de Keroubec would appear in one day at the latest or he would not be admitted. 'It is blatant rudeness, that is what it is,' she said. 'I will not have you give yourself to such a man, my love.'

'Maybe,' the dancing-master said, 'maybe some highwaymen have captured him or else a wandering band of peasants. They are going up and down the country.'

'Oh, you men,' she said, 'you all protect each other. He could easily have got here, had he wished to.'

Then my dancing-master clothed himself in a mysterious air. 'Madame,' he said, 'will you put on your face again a handkerchief? When I remove it, Keroubec will have arrived.'

'You deal in magic! Sir,' she crossed herself, 'are you an emissary of the devil?'

'Madame

'Madame, you shall judge for yourself. Now please to lay your handkerchief. . . .'

He spoke with such authority that she complied. 'Oh, very well,' she said. 'So be it. Yvonne, cover up your eyes. There is unholy work afoot.'

'Now,' said the man, 'now, Comtesse, you can open yours again. The Marquis has arrived. And as I do not want to mystify you any further, let me have the honour to present myself. My name is Charles de Keroubec.'

I heard a range of mountains being crushed by some gigantic hand. There was a tempest of black storm-clouds and of dazzling, coloured lights. A thousand, thousand demons who were squatting on the clouds—they grinned at me. And words were being uttered. I saw one of them. 'Amusement'—it was traced upon the sky with myriads of cruel sparks which emanated from the demons' finger-tips and from their pointed tails. And then this brilliant word began to dance. Behind it the grim clouds were dancing—all the world was dancing—to and fro derisively. Fool that I was to have accepted this man as a dancing-master! He was talking.

'As I said before, it was to escape from Paris

 . . . wrong

"VOILÀ LE COSTUME DÉSIRÉ!"
(Riches and Poverty reconciled)

. . . wrong perhaps . . . excuse me . . . find amusement . . . in this way to know each other better . . . say that you forgive me . . . ladies, let me beg you. . . .'

I looked at my mother. She had the appearance of a fish when it is gasping on the bank.

'Permit me to give proof,' he said. 'You have received from me some letters. I will write upon this piece of paper. You will notice that the writing is the same.'

'Oh, spare yourself the trouble,' said my mother in a trembling voice. And then she laughed excitedly. 'I knew at once,' she said, 'that you were someone in disguise. It was an excellent idea. What made you do it?'

X

This thirtieth of August of 1791

At last there has occurred a scene I want to write about. For two whole years I have been living in this quiet place, my husband's ancient Breton castle. It is far away from all the turmoil, though the leaders of the people send their missions even here. They try to make this faithful Brittany be as the other

 pro-

provinces of France. My husband will not let me go to any other part and so we live, like vegetables, waiting for the tempest to subside. We had a wonderful escape this year in June. My mother thought that one could go to Paris, and invited us to go with her. But Charles, who is the best of husbands, would not let me undergo the risk. He therefore wrote a letter to my mother, saying that we would be glad if she would use our little house, which I have never seen. So with her woman she arrived in Paris and installed herself. But most unhappily King Louis tried to run out of the land, as many others of the Royal Family and of the aristocracy have done. When he was captured and brought back some of the populace in Paris were so furious that they rushed into the houses of the fashionable quarters and assassinated. It was quite illogical, of course; yet as my mother had herself been frequently illogical it had an element of harmony. Her woman sent a message to us that our furniture was scarcely damaged by the wild assassins. Only three chairs had been slashed. So while we grieved for my dear mother we had something with which to console ourselves.

My

My brother Polydore came also to a most unlucky end. His regiment was not as loyal as the Swiss Guard or the German Guard. In fact as it was marching from Versailles, with several of its officers in chains, it met a mob of men and women. There was joy and fraternising and all that. The soldiers grew so cordial that some of them exclaimed that they must give a pledge of their good faith. And so they slew their colonel, my poor Polydore.

These incidents and others that we heard of caused my husband to be still more careful than he is by nature. Fortunately where we live the people cling devoutly to the dear, ancestral ways. That episode which I am going to write about is all concerned with these old ways.

Charles was administering justice in the yellow room; and I was in the next room, reading once again my darling *Paul et Virginie*.[1] I

[1] This book had been published in 1789, in the fourth volume of the author's *Études de la Nature,* whose object was to prove the existence of God in the marvels of nature. At all events *Paul et Virginie* had an instantaneous and huge success. More than three hundred imitations appeared. Parents called their children by these two famous names, which the author conferred likewise on his own children. Until this time Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (*b.* 1737, *d.* 1814) had led a very agitated

won-

wondered why we cannot live in France as beautifully as upon that island. Bernardin, however, gives the explanation, for he tells how nature is benevolent and how society is dangerous, corrupt and very evil.

From the yellow room there came a sudden whirl of agitated voices. I knew that a man from Paris had been captured while he was endeavouring to make the people turn away from their old, cherished practices. It was entirely wrong, he said, that any nobleman should have the power of life and death, that he should be a judge at all. And now the

life. He went campaigning in Hesse in 1760, took part in 1761 in the expedition to Malta, gave mathematical lessons in Paris and set out to establish an agricultural and democratic colony on the shore of a Russian lake. In Amsterdam a fellow-countryman sought to detain him by giving him the hand of his sister, in Moscow he became a second lieutenant and perhaps one of the lovers of Catherine the Second, so that he seems to have forgotten about the colony. Proceeding to Finland he studied nature and then for fifteen months in Warsaw he practised secret diplomacy and love with a princess. In Berlin he declined the offer of Frederick the Great to become a captain of engineers, as well as that of one Taubenheim, a courtier, that he should become his son-in-law. Returning to France he sailed for Mauritius, where his stay was brief, but long enough for collecting the local colour of *Paul et Virginie*. He was accused of having treated the natives in a cruel manner.—*Trans.*

fellow

fellow was obliged to come before this kind of court. No wonder that he was protesting loudly.

I turned back to my beloved *Paul et Virginie*. How nice it is to learn that the whole universe is planned for human happiness, that melons, for example, are so big because they are designed to feed the family, while Providence intended us to share the pumpkin with our neighbours, for which reason it is larger than the melon.

But in the next room that uproar did not cease. My husband usually by his presence could maintain a perfect order. Why was he allowing them to shout like this? I rose and went in there.

It was our worthy bailiff, Philicien Tremel, who was on his feet, denouncing the intruder. He, for his part, with a look of scorn all over his pale, dirty countenance, was interjecting most outspoken and offensive words. And Charles did not know where to look. I never had beheld him so embarrassed.

'Once for all, I tell you,' screamed Philicien, 'we are believers in the customs of the ancients. We refuse to give them up.'

'You miserable slaves!' the man called out.

'Most

'Most people must be rescued from themselves. If Paris hears of this——'

'The Droit du Seigneur is a custom that we love. We have received it from our venerable fathers and, with God's assistance, we will not abandon it. What do you say, my friends?' There was a chorus of approval. Some were long-haired peasants in their wide and flowing breeches, some were fishermen with rugged profiles, some were servants of our own. They all had the same ardent gaze.

'Why do the women go in black upon the Île de Sein?'[1] asked an old fisherman. 'The reason it is this——' the others knew, but they could not help listening to the aged man. 'Who has not heard about the bells which travel every Easter Sunday down below the sea to Rome? They go to pray for all the mariners who have been wrecked upon that coast. And once the people of the island did

[1] This arid, rocky island lies five miles from the Pointe du Raz, the most westerly spot in France. Its inhabitants, between 600 and 700, are mostly engaged in fishing. According to Pomponius Mela, who flourished in the first century of our era, the island, then known as Sena, contained a celebrated oracle whose interpreters were nine priestesses vowed to perpetual virginity. This legend was used by Chateaubriand in his *Velléda*, the last of the nine virgins.—*Trans.*

not

not listen, as the custom was, upon the rocks. Instead of it they went to Mass; and ever since there have been far more accidents.'

'Long live the ancient ways!' ejaculated somebody.

The man from Paris stamped his riding-boot. He said that they were unenlightened. A great, splendid dawn had risen over France and here were they preferring the foul darkness of the Middle Ages.

'I prefer with all my soul,' said honest Tremel, 'that my daughters, every one of them, should pass the first night of their marriage with our gracious master.'

'Have you,' asked the man from Paris, 'have you no sense of dignity? Are you so thoroughly debased?'

At this the room was filled with growling and with more articulate expressions of resentment. Fists were being shaken at the stranger.

'If I may remind you,' said my husband, 'you are standing in a court of law.'

'It is a court I do not recognise!'

'And, as for dignity,' the bailiff said, 'he seems to be the kind of man who does not care if in his grandson is a strain of better blood. . . . Then let him wallow in the mire. We others,

we

we are climbing, climbing . . . we shall mingle with the stars, if I may say so. . . . This will be the democratic land when we become in blood the equals of the great. . . . Aye, slowly, very surely does their blood flow down into our veins. And you, you try to stop it! You would keep for evermore the barriers which separate the nobles from the rest of us.'

The man from Paris looked as if he would explode. 'Democracy! democracy!' he cried. 'Your sacred name is being spoiled, besmirched. This fool he does not know that we shall pull down the aristos and in that way make one level of mankind.'

Then the old fisherman smote vigorously on his thigh. 'Aha!' said he. 'One levels down, one levels up.'

And the good bailiff very quietly addressed my husband. He spoke just as if the others had been swept away, as if he and my husband were alone transacting some affairs of the estate.

'When will it be convenient for Monsieur le Marquis,' he said, 'that I bring my daughter? She is going to be married, as Monsieur le Marquis knows. When may I bring her up?'

The man from Paris burst into rough joviality.

'I recom-

'I recommend you all,' he said, 'to have your fill of these barbaric banquets while you may. Enjoy yourselves, for very soon the tables will be overturned, the feasters driven out.'

'But listen to me,' said the bailiff. 'You pretend we are barbarians. And though you talk to us like that we do not even strike you. Yes, what is it?'

Men were gathering about my husband. With anxiety upon their faces they were pushing towards him. 'If it pleases you, Monsieur le Marquis,' one of them began.

'Excuse me,' said one in a louder voice, 'but my girl is the prettiest of the countryside.'

'Have I no claim, Monsieur le Marquis?' asked the aged fisherman. 'You have been friendly with me all your life. Did you not come with me when you were so high? When I landed you upon a rock and you became the King of it. . . . What times we used to have!'

'Well, I should like to know,' the bailiff said, 'what all that has to do with it.'

'Besides,' said the old fisherman, 'my granddaughter is not the ugliest.'

The man from Paris was the person in the room who was deriving the most entertain-

ment

ment out of this extraordinary scene. His menace of the abolition of the 'Droit de Seigneur' had been taken very seriously. And half the people, so it seemed, had female candidates of more than common merit. Many were the methods that were being used to catch my husband's eye. The poor man made me think of a wild boar when it is trying to defend itself against the howling, capering dogs.

He looked from side to side and he perceived that I was in the room. His face became extremely eloquent.

The question for me was what I could do.

The man from Paris—who would have believed it possible?—stood on a chair and shouted that he was quite glad that they were taking his advice. He drew a piece of paper from his pocket. He would help, he said. They must have order. Let him put the names down. Afterwards they would arrange the dates. 'Speak up! Here is the list!' he cried.

Oh, *Paul et Virginie!*

But

XI

This twelfth of June of 1792

BUT it was by assassination that my husband met his death. So perfectly did he, from the beginning to the end, monopolise my love—and I am thoroughly affectionate—that during all our married life I did not have one single lover. It is true that in this isolated home of ours there is no great abundance of delightful swains; but if we had gone regularly to Versailles and mingled with the flower of Europe I would very valiantly—and, let me hope, successfully—have battled against their advances. Now my dearest Charles is lying dead and what is to become of me? I care so little.

He believed that in this everlasting warfare which is waged between the Chouans and the soldiers he would be a victim, since the soldiers used to say that he was secretly as much a Chouan as the worst of them. With all his might be toiled for reconciliation, but the two opposing parties loathed each other far too much.

'When

'When I am here no more,' he sometimes said, 'then you must go, my little one, to England. They are very good to us. And we are just as good to them, for with the thousands of our priests who now inhabit England it will not be long, I have been told, before the Protestant religion will be swept away.'

'But can the priests talk English?' I would ask.

He smiled because I was so practical. 'Their presence is enough,' he said. 'The bishops over there are preaching sermons full of pity.'

'Are those bishops leading back their people to our faith?' I asked.

'The signs,' said he, 'are very favourable. Till recently a priest who celebrated Mass in public over there was liable to death; and now this penalty is not exacted. What more evidence need I adduce that all goes well? And when you are in England——'

'You must come with me,' I said, 'or I shall never go.'

Then he would always answer that he could not leave his people. And he made me promise that if anything occurred to him I would immediately set out. That is to say

as

as soon as I could reach an English vessel, for one cannot trust our countrymen.

Last week when Cousin Bernard came I was so glad. He told us how, when my dear mother passed away in Paris, he made up his mind to emigrate. But he discovered that it was as difficult to leave the country as to live in it. They drove him back from near Dunkirk and then he wandered to and fro. At last he managed, by all kinds of subterfuges, to work his way to Brittany. I thought the perils he had passed through had improved him very much indeed.

'Do you remember, my dear friend,' I said, 'when you were teaching us about the fourteenth Louis?'

'And I did not even know our own time then,' said he. 'What fools we are who think that we can understand the men of old when we have never mingled with the living.'

Charles persuaded him to go with me if I should start for England. He was ready to set forth at once or in a week or in a year. He did not know as much as Charles about the imminent conversion of the English people.

'No doubt you yourself will take a part in it,' my husband said.

'I am

'I am quite ready to convert the Protestants,' said he, 'who wait upon me for that purpose.' And to-morrow evening we must go, because my husband's prophecy has happened. I shall be lamenting him for ever.

If one looks upon it from the soldiers' point of view they really are quite justified in being angry. When a soldier wanders from the camp or on the march does not keep closely to the others he runs a considerable risk, as their opponents take advantage of the furze and of the sheltering trees. It is no use explaining to the soldiers that the Chouans are good people and that they are patriots. My husband was afraid they would be roused because of the regrettable event at Kerfeuille [1] the other day. A party of dragoons were ambuscaded; one of them was seized alive and he was then put in the turf up to his neck. The Chouans showered blows upon the part of him above the soil and when he ceased to

[1] This civil war was conducted in a very atrocious fashion. For example, in 1793 it happened that 15,000 insurgents found themselves faced by about a thousand citizens, among whom were a number of constitutional priests. Many of them were massacred; some, after having been confessed, were shot; others were obliged to march in front of the victorious columns.—*Trans.*

 live

live they sang around him a Te Deum. What was there that we could do to calm the fury of the other soldiers? One might have suggested that the Chouans had provided their late comrade with an end less disagreeable than that which overtook the member of the National Guard at Cléguérec, whom the stern Chouans laid between two planks of wood and sawed in two. The soldiers were vindictive, one could see, and I was very nervous for my husband's safety. When they murdered him three days ago they sent a message up to me that as he also had good qualities they had bestowed on him a kindly death. Their chief had lent his heavy sword and the decapitation was so swift that it was practically finished in two blows.

We buried him, my dearest love, at night, because if they had learned that Cousin Bernard is a priest it would not have been well for him.

Our bailiff and the aged fisherman supported me; and as the moonlight showed the faces of the grieving Chouans I was full of sorrow that the soldiers could not see them, for they would have recognised that men are brothers.

As we were returning the old fisherman in-

formed

formed me that by chance an English vessel had appeared and that the crew would wait for me. It is not very much I have to pay them. So with Cousin Bernard I shall sail to-morrow evening from a secret place; the fisherman will guide us.

It is said that George III is very philanthropic to our people and that his officials lodge us in old palaces and that the Parliament provides them with two guineas every month. There will be refugees of all kinds, so that I regard the future hopefully.

It is a pity, though, that Monsieur Marat has become involved in politics. My husband used to know that gentleman before and after he had lived in England [1] and it seems he is a

[1] After having learned Greek, Latin, English, Italian, Spanish, German and Dutch, Jean Paul Marat spent ten years in London and there, in 1773, he published his first work: *A Philosophical Essay on Man*, which when translated in 1775 incurred the sarcasm of Voltaire. Marat also published *The Chains of Slavery*, a political pamphlet and, having at the same time studied medicine, he became an M.D. of St. Andrews in 1775. He then returned to Paris, where he chiefly devoted himself to scientific pursuits. . . . His subsequent political activities have overshadowed his medical achievements and have caused his name to be generally execrated. Recent researches have established his scientific genius and have also given a medical explanation for his extreme violence.—*Trans.*

very

very interesting man who wrote a book on diseases of the eye—he gave a copy of it, bound in red morocco, to Queen Marie Antoinette —and other books on light and electricity. He is a man, my husband said, who has conducted deep researches in the realm of nature. It is my bad luck that he should not have stayed in England, as I rarely meet a learned man. He would have made the time pass well for me in England, I am sure, because I have so little knowledge as to electricity and light. He would have let me bother him, since I know from my husband that he has but one desire and that is to be useful to humanity.

XII

This thirtieth of June of 1792, in England

At the bottom of the cliff it was that Robert came into my life. We had descended very slowly, first the fisherman, then I, then Cousin Bernard. Even if the clouds had not been heavy Cousin Bernard and myself would have been forced to exercise the greatest care. Between the stones and the furze undergrowth a little track went winding down. And when,

with

with battered feet, we stumbled to the shore, it was to find that lovely boy.

I stared at him.

'Will you wait here a moment,' said the fisherman, 'while I see where the English are? I did not dare to have a light for them. Do not be anxious. They will be just round the corner.'

Who was that poor boy? He looked so sad. Then Cousin Bernard noticed him. 'Be careful what you say,' he whispered. 'It may be a spy.'

A spy and with a face like that! What other faces could the angels have? My heart was burning with a pain most exquisite.

The boy stood up. His clothes were patched and very ragged. And the sleeve came halfway down between his elbow and his wrist. I saw that he was pointing to the sea.

'My little friend, will you go with me on the ship?' I asked.

His eagerness was almost pitiful. 'If I may come with you,' he faltered, 'there is nothing that I will not do for you.'

Just then the fisherman returned; and with him were some of the English. 'All these men are here,' explained the fisherman, 'be-

cause

cause they thought you would have a large quantity of baggage. How I wish we could have done it. They will be surprised to see that you have only that small box of valuables.'

'If they demand more payment,' Cousin Bernard said, 'I have a dozen silver spoons.'

'No, they were thinking of the treasure you would take with you to England. But they do not know how we were being watched up there and how we had to slip away.'

Oh, treasure, treasure! Caves of it were standing open. This enchanting boy recovered from the shadows and spread out before me the most wonderful of my forgotten dreams.

'This is the captain of the English,' said the fisherman.

A pleasant, stalwart man was there. He bowed a little clumsily and at the same time there was something that amused him. He addressed me in a kind of French which I could understand.

'Dear sir,' I said, 'you give me confidence.'

'How many of you are there?' asked the captain.

'Only three,' I said. 'This is my cousin and, as you are English, I can tell you that he is a priest. And this young—this young——'

'Yes

'Yes, I know, the acolyte. But you can tell me all about your friends when we are under weigh.'

Then Cousin Bernard stepped aside with me. 'Come now,' he said, 'do you consider it is well to take him?'

'And why not?' I asked. 'He does not look as if he is a murderer.'

'What is he?' Cousin Bernard said.

I kept a marvellous control upon myself. 'Do you not think,' I said, 'it would be nice if you knew more of human nature? By the big toe of the Pope,' I said, 'it is deplorable. They put you in command of souls and you are like a child. Much worse, because a child or any dog could see at once——'

'I know what you are going to say,' he said. 'Let us go on.'

'It certainly would be unfortunate,' quoth I, 'if our opponents follow us down here and find us arguing about the lad.'

I held my hand out to the English captain, so that he should lead me thence. The boy walked close to me; and there was nothing said of him until the fisherman had bidden me farewell.

'You there!' he said—and then he saw

that

that we were hand in hand. He looked uneasy.

Was I no more than a robber? In my heart I felt that I was leaving somebody without the starshine and the nightingales. But how could I give up this heavenly booty? So I told the fisherman that it is proper for a boy to see the world. It would be wrong if we stood in his way, I said.

He answered that the boy had surely run from home. His mother would be very much relieved.

I puzzled over those last words, but as the fisherman had uttered them just as I got into the rowing-boat I could not ask him to explain. We had not gone more than a little way towards the vessel when I suddenly beheld the truth. This boy had the exploring spirit, which his mother could not satisfy from her restricted means. Oh, what a privilege it was for me to help him. I did not pay much attention to what happened, how they were transferring us into the larger boat—the first one I had ever been upon—and how the captain showed me where to lie and how the sails were flapping and the boat began to move, because I was so fascinated by the dear

 explorer.

explorer. I said that I understood completely how he longed to see the world. We would begin with England and then, afterwards, where would he like to go?

He had an air of wistfulness. I placed my hand upon his brow and bade him not to be afraid. I would take care of him. But he did not respond. To my surprise he turned away from me. Those words of the old fisherman . . . but how could such a boy have a poor character? I watched him carefully and at the same time I resolved to keep my faith intact. And then to my tremendous joy the cause of his behaviour was disclosed—the sea had made him sick.

I was so happy that I crooned a little song and when he looked with loathing I was happy still, because I told myself that it was life, not me, which he detested.

Of the voyage and the landing and what has occurred in England I shall not write very much. Through all that period I was taken up with Robert, and thus I became a traveller upon a road that undulates. The boy was charming, so that I rejoiced in everything which came to pass, because it linked my fate with his; and then, a moment after, he was

surly

surly and uncouth. But I could not demolish the great love I bore him. One could almost say that I was his devoted slave. He was enough for me. I scarcely left the house, for England is the country where it is most pleasant for the poor to live, and though I had my jewels I was going to be economical. There is no need for one to tramp around the market. Every day the butcher comes and calls out 'Butcher!' Then you tell him what you want. He leaves it on a little wooden tray. I am so fond of England.

There was much of English life I did not see, because of Robert, my dear boy.

When he complained that we were always fed on puddings I believe that I then for the first time noticed them. And when he came back one day to our lodgings in high spirits because he and several others had been throwing mud at Chauvelin,[1] the French Ambassador, I had

[1] Bernard Francis, Marquis de Chauvelin (*b.* in Paris 1766, *d.* 1832) succeeded his father in a Court appointment. He also became a captain of hussars, but having acquired very liberal ideas he rejoiced at the coming of the Revolution. He went as a figure-head Ambassador to London (the real one being Talleyrand) for the purpose of securing England's neutrality in the prospective war between France and the Coalition. Chauvelin remained in London after the fall of Louis

to

to say that I had never heard of him. But with my Robert I rejoiced. We called in some of our compatriots and had a merry time. The furniture of my small sitting-room was not the kind to raise your spirits, but in that room and in our two bedrooms opening out of it we much enjoyed ourselves.

And then I was insulted savagely. It happened after we had drunk—and in what liquid! to the death of some of the chief reprobates of France. We vied with one another as we cursed them, we became hilarious—and as a certain lady, a Princess, alluded to a man called Marat I pricked up my ears, since he was that one whom my husband talked to me about, the one who used to dwell in England. But in Paris, as I now have learned, his writings are of the most bitter kind. No longer does he occupy himself with electricity and with diseases of the eye.

XVI; but in January 1793 he was asked to leave within twenty-four hours and to depart from England in eight days. His life had various ups and downs. In 1802, for instance, he aroused the wrath of the First Consul for having been too active in his opposition to the establishment of the Legion of Honour. But in 1804 he became a member of the Legislative Assembly and the Legion of Honour was conferred upon him. —*Trans.*

'When

'When he was young,' I said, 'I should have liked to meet him.'

'But no, no!' laughed the Princess. 'You would have hated it. That man, till he was twenty-one, remained a virgin.'

There was laughter and the woman leered triumphantly. What did she mean?

'I beg you, Madame la Princesse,' I said and in an icy tone, 'will you be good enough to tell me what there is behind your words?'

She folded her two arms across her breast defiantly. 'Ah well,' she said, 'am I mistaken if I think you are not overfond of them when they resemble what he was? This youthful friend of yours, for instance——'

'Madame, hold it shut!' I cried. 'Be careful. My dear little Robert is more innocent than snow.'

A disagreeable expression floated on her lips and then she absolutely beamed at me. 'Of course,' she said, 'if you are sure——'

'As sure as death,' quoth I.

'Then there is nothing to be said. But do not let us interrupt the festival. Ho, you there with the music instrument and you and you!'

The merry-makers flung themselves into the fray once more and with such zeal as if to

wipe

wipe away the memory of this conversation. Some of them as they were dancing also sang and altogether there was a good deal of noise. Later on it came to pass that I was looking for my Robert. He was not in any of the rooms. An icy fear crept over me; that Chauvelin had lured him out for vengeance. But no person there, so far as I could ascertain, had seen him go. And the musicians were continuing till I imperiously stopped them.

'Let us all run out into the streets,' I said, 'of this accursed land and search and search until we find him.'

We were on the way downstairs when I perceived the street-door opening and convulsive sounds of laughter floated up. One of the voices was the voice of Robert.

That most horrible Princess was with him. I would kill the woman. But my arm was seized. And I can give no clear account of what took place. They swept me up the stairs and some of them were in the room a long time afterwards. One worthy woman made me a large cup of tea of camomile; and when the others all had left she sat there and she looked away from me. . . . I think she was

 afraid

afraid that I would do myself an injury. And so I fell to stroking her warm hand.

'Now you will leave this country,' she was saying. 'How I wish that I could go with you.' She said on several occasions in the next few days, when she came in with food and with my ticket for the coach and with the latest cheerful news from everywhere, she said that more than half my life was still in front of me and she considered that the second half could always, if one had some wisdom, be made better than the first.

Well, as I sit here in this harbour town, from which I will be sailing in two hours or three, I wonder if it will be as that woman said.

XIII

This eleventh of August of 1792

WHO would have thought when Polydore, my brother who is dead, went off to be a colonel that I would myself some day be serving with an army? Who would have imagined that the Princes' army, side by side with German troops, would be assembled here beyond the eastern boundary of France? What we shall

do

do is to destroy the wretched fellows—I am told that they are very wretched—who are going to try to hinder us. We shall be back in Paris in a little time.

A gentleman with whom I have become acquainted told me yesterday that it is most significant, in his opinion, that this army of the nobles [1] is not formed exclusively of men. We are the flower of all the nation and quite different from a common army. So it is a beautiful idea, he says, to let the ladies take a part. A number of them go in men's attire; but this he deprecates, and so do I. It seems to me that even if you have the figure for it, which is very rare, the course is not one to be recommended. In a village that I stopped at on the journey were two girls arrayed as men and very downcast did they look, because the men were not attracted in the proper kind of way.

[1] In Lavisse's *Histoire de France Contemporaire*, Vol. I, p. 424, we read that 4,500 French *émigrés* followed the Prussians. Brunswick placed them in the rear of his army, in order not to arouse the people's rage. These *émigrés* lacked money and were ill-equipped. 'It is an indisciplined mob, swaggering and futile, of no military value, and accompanied by many women, children, mistresses and servants. It is hated by all the Prussian generals and other officers.'—*Trans.*

So

So let us keep our dress. We noble ladies with a sabre and with spurs have a most excellent appearance on our horses. Luckily I have obtained a horse from the kind gentleman. He says he thought that I would come. Those ladies who are not on horseback follow in berlines and other carriages. They will be splendid as they roll into the streets of Paris, with the glittering metal coronets on the great metal lamps.

XIV

This twenty-ninth of August of 1792

For several days I did not know what the intentions were of the good gentleman. But now it is quite clear to me that he is an opponent of the temporary unions which are being formed throughout the army. He alludes to them with words of reprobation which are interesting and unique. In fact he is the sort of man who thinks that it should be prohibited for any bishop to have an alliance with a lady. His own uncle, he maintains, did wrong to link himself with the Duchesse of

 Mazarin

Mazarin, the celebrated one, while at the same time he was the Archbishop of the diocese of Lyons.

'Many disapproved of him,' he said, 'because he put the iron beds into the hospitals. They had been asked for by the town, the Ministers had not agreed and so my uncle acted on his own responsibility. He ordered them and paid two hundred thousand francs from his own pocket. As it was a lesson for the Ministers they were displeased. The King was perfectly content. That is what makes me be a member of this army. I admire the goodness of the King.'

'Monsieur,' I said, 'I have felt all the time that you are a good man.'

We chanced to be beside the road to Thionville. Our horses we had fastened to a tree. The servant of the gentleman was with them; and we two, some twenty steps away, reclined beneath the shadow of another tree. We had to wait, so that the carriages and the large baggage carts could join us. After they have all arrived—and also, naturally, the guns—we shall attack and capture Thionville. But in the meantime there is scarcely anything that we can do. When I say scarcely anything I

 do

do not mean my personal affairs. It was the moment to attend to them.

'You have not told me,' I said, 'where you have got your lands. Which is your part of France?'

'How can we say that we have any lands at all?' he asked. 'Perhaps, Yvonne, you have not studied the philosophers who say there is no time nor space.'

I shook my head.

'Well, it appears that there is neither time nor space. And there is certainly no space in France which I can say belongs to me. The legislation of to-day and of to-morrow——'

'Still, where is your property?' I asked.

He said that hitherto he had resided in Touraine.

'And I have from my first husband,' I informed him, 'a considerable Breton castle and a house which I have not yet seen in Paris, in the Rue des Saints-Pères.'

'Yes,' he said. 'To-morrow we are going to Angerville. Then the siege of Thionville will start.'

I laid my hand on his. 'You do not seem to take much interest,' I said, 'in my two houses.'

'So you have two houses? That is very nice.'

He was so strange. I turned it over in my

mind

mind if it is better not to have a close acquaintance with your husband when you marry him. One's life, when married, will have less monotony.

'Look down the road,' I said. 'All that long line of nobles, all those ladies—it is wonderful that you and I have come together.'

'I am very glad,' quoth he, 'to help you. Let us stay together until we and our companions have brought succour to the King.'

I saw I must accommodate myself to his slow methods. He would tell me in his own good time that he desired to be my husband. Then I had a very striking thought—suppose he did not know himself that in the bottom of his heart he loved me? It might be that he is one of those who have their gaze so fixed upon the far horizon that they do not see what is within themselves. I started to consider how it would be best to deal with him. And so we sat, perhaps two hours, beside the road to Thionville—while multitudes of noisy men and horses clattered past us. We gave not the slightest heed; my gentleman had every thought engaged upon the distant things, but every thought of mine was concentrated on what lay so near.

I do

L'général vat en guerre *Air* *Avec roïal bombon*
Mironton ton ton Mirontaine *Et le roïal pituitte*
L'général vat en gäerre. *de Malborough* *Miroton ton ton Mirontaine*
Avec roïal bombon, *Et le roïal pituitte*

Contre les Emigrants

THE NOBLES EMIGRATE

I do not know how long we should have stayed in meditation—certainly I had not solved my own grave problem—when we were addressed by one who, with his legs apart, had placed himself in front of us. He carried a large pile of papers which he said he was about to burn. If we would like to witness it, he said, there was no reason why we should not have this entertainment. Then he added that he was a mayor and that these papers were all kinds of proclamations and decrees which the pernicious patriots had been distributing. 'I daresay you and your good lady want to have a little rest,' he said. 'But this will surely be refreshment for you.'

Then my gentleman remarked that he was pained to hear the revolutionaries spoken of as patriots. It was a serious mistake.

'Well, everybody calls them that,' replied the mayor. 'We shall ignite the Tree of Liberty. In every place they have erected such a tree.'

I thought that this would make a goodly spectacle and so I urged the gentleman to come.

As he arose he mentioned to the mayor that there was music which appropriately might be sung. The people could join hands around

the

the burning tree and sing the *Salvum fac regem.*

'But you are a genius,' cried the mayor, 'if one may say so.'

Since the gentleman seemed not to hear him, but to be preoccupied with other thoughts, I thanked the mayor.

'Do you not hold, sir,' said my gentleman, 'that we who often fight with nothing else than swords and pistols, we who merely wish to save the King, do you not hold that we are patriotic persons?'

'But of course I do, sir,' said the mayor, 'of course I do.'

If only my good gentleman—he really had good qualities—could have perceived that I was going through a crisis. He continued sturdily to talk of patriots. He asked the mayor why the republicans were called by such a name.

'Well,' said the mayor, 'everybody calls them that.'

This was the moment when I settled, and it was irrevocable, that I would not marry the good gentleman. I think it was an excellent resolve.

'Yvonne,' he said, 'I see that you are shiver-

ing

ing. Allow me to put over you this cloak. We must take care of you, my little patriot.' Whatever saint it was, I thanked him for protecting me from that abyss.

XV

This fifteenth of September of 1792

How much I resemble Monsieur de Bellegarde of the artillery! He said he had some inextinguishable fire that would cause Thionville to yield. But now the army has gone past that miserable town. So drenched and sodden was the place from all the rains. My gentleman was very sodden to and he has caused the fire in me to flicker out. I hope it has not gone for ever.

During these torrential rains it has been much more satisfactory to travel with some other ladies in a carriage. Seeing that it is a carriage of the high command, we have a plentitude of cooks and valets who procure for us enough to eat. Both of the ladies with me are the friends of two among our Princes and they say that if I like they will obtain for me a similar position with another of the blood. But I have not

 made

made up my mind. To be the mistress of a Prince is full of honour, yet it is precarious. And after what has happened to me since I lost my husband I should like to settle down. Meanwhile it is agreeable to be at Verdun, as the shops are open. After spending too much time upon the high road and wet fields I must acknowledge that it is a consolation to be in the neighbourhood of shops. The royal mistresses are both, of course, from Paris; so at first they laughed contemptuously at the Verdun shops, but now they cannot keep away from them. We drive about the street, for there is a great deal of mud, the pavement having been removed, so that the bombs should do less injury. We ladies, the two mistresses and I, are thus brought into contact with the revolutionaries, who are still quite unabashed. Although the white flag floats above them and their horrid tricolour has vanished they have given very rude replies to certain of our officers who spoke to them. They said that we are perfectly incapable and that the town did not capitulate to us but to the King of Prussia and that the police are acting in his name. So they continually sneer at us, the noble army. After all that we have

suf-

suffered it is dreadful to be told such things. I will decline to listen to a word of that abominable crew.

XVI

This twenty-fifth of September of 1792

Nobody can say that Monsieur Dalmines is abominable. As soon as we had been repulsed at Valmy and the troops, ours and the Prussians, were compelled to go in haste, one saw that no arrangements had been made for a retreat. But even if the cleverest arrangements had been planned, how could they have been executed in that sea of mud and hopelessness and iron cold and horrible confusion and fierce, pelting rain?

We three in our great carriage struggled onward with the rest. The mistresses complained unceasingly that they were not accorded any privileges. When our coachman was pushed off the miry road and was compelled to take us over the soft meadows there was nobody considerate enough to bring another horse, although they could have seen we wanted it. I even found the coachman

 talking

talking very grimly to the valet and as I drew near he stopped. No doubt they were perfecting a most wicked scheme to rob and then abandon us. I told the mistresses that we had too much luggage (I myself had nothing save my jewel-case and a few garments tied together in a sheet). By sacrificing nearly all those heavy boxes we would have a chance of keeping up. The mistresses refused. I therefore asked them what they would do next, suppose the servants ran away or even slew them.

'But they have no right! It is impossible!' they both exclaimed.

'The most unwonted things are happening,' I said. 'You know as well as I do that the people hide their provender. Three villages have now declared that they can sell us nothing. They will not accept our paper money made out in the King's own name.'

'Are they not traitors, then?'

'But what,' I asked, 'do you propose to do?'

One of the mistresses cried out that she could not endure my questions. 'And what we can do,' she said, 'we can request you, Madame la Marquise, in fine that you . . .'

'But

'But what will that help?' said the other. 'She does not weigh much.'

'Then, please,' the first one said to me, 'please try to be less gloomy.' And she gulped, but could not keep her tears from falling.

It was at this moment that a horse pulled up beside our carriage and the rider, a fine fellow —though he was a revolutionary—peered inside. He said he much regretted that a lady should be weeping. How could he assist her?

'Monsieur,' she replied amid her sobs, 'you are the first man who has spoken to me kindly.'

'They have treated us,' the other said, 'in a most shameful fashion. Will you really help us?' Then she noticed that he was an enemy. 'But—but you are gloating over us,' she said, 'in our distress.'

He answered that she was misjudging him. Of course the *emigrés* would be severely dealt with now if they returned to Paris. But if we would place our trust in him all would be well. He had some influence. He could save anyone he liked; and as he was a man of sensibility it made him sad that ladies like

 our-

ourselves should go to ruin. What would happen to us, did we think, in Germany now that we were in such a state, with no resources left? And as we had no man to help us, he would fill the rôle.

'What makes you imagine we have nobody to help us?' asked a mistress. 'Evidently you do not know who we are.'

'Do you decline my offer?' said the man.

'We are obliged to you,' she answered. 'I shall mention it at Court that all the revolutionaries are not savage animals. Yes, you must know, young man, that we have the most powerful protectors in existence. We two, my friend here and I, we are related to the Royal Family.'

He put his hands up quietly to his ears. He did not want to have to seize the women, for he was humane. 'I must ride off,' he said. 'May Fortune smile on you and your companions.'

Just as he was going I leant out and plucked his sleeve. I told him that I was not royal and that if he had a mind to rescue me——

One of the mistresses burst out into repulsive laughter. Thereupon I slapped her in the face.

'You

'You dare,' I cried, 'you dare to dream that we have such intentions, this my noble rescuer and I?'

Then did the other one raise up her voice, repeating the word 'noble' very scoffingly. 'Is he a marquis or perhaps a prince?' she asked.

'Permit me,' said the man, 'to introduce myself. My name is Alexandre Dalmines. I have been a marquis and a prince quite often, seeing that I am an actor. I have even, now and then,' he added, with a flickering smile, 'been one of your more celebrated ancestors.'

'No, no!' I intervened. 'These women are not royal any more than you or I. They probably were pulled out of the gutter. It is suitable that we should leave them in the mud.'

By this time I had jumped out of the carriage and the comely Alexandre was dismounting. He insisted that I should bestride his horse. When I was safely in the saddle I looked round to bid farewell to those two women; but they would not let themselves be seen. I therefore said in a clear voice that which I had to say.

But Alexandre interrupted me and showed

again

again the fibre he was made of, for he deprecated the effect I was producing on the coachman and the valet. They were laughing unrestrainedly.

'Come, let us go,' said Alexandre, and the mud splashed almost to his knees.

I told him that I never in my life could give him thanks enough. What he had saved me from! A mass, inextricable mass of carriages and laden carts and steaming horses and gesticulating, frantic men was trying to advance. Men who were flogging the poor animals or labouring to get the wheels out of enormous holes went on as if the people were not straggling past them, as if others prostrate with fatigue and misery did not stretch out their piteous arms.

'One cannot be surprised,' he said, 'that your companions were distraught by this abomination. You will see that what they said of me is false. I am an honourable man.' He threw his shoulders back and walked for a few steps more rigidly, until he trod into a hole.

As I said nothing, he turned partly round. 'But why,' he asked, 'have you that frightened look? I tell you solemnly that I will never touch a single hair upon your head.'

But

But no, I was not frightened, I was pensive. How is it that I am always meeting men like that?

XVII

This twenty-second of April of 1793

SEVERAL months have gone since I arrived in Paris in the house my husband always meant to bring me to. At first I thought of him at every other moment of the day. But we are beings—God be thanked—who can recover, so that nowadays I will be sitting in the little mauve salon without continually looking round to see if he is watching me and I can go to sleep in the fine bed he chose without imagining that all the golden stars which decorate the canopy are, every one of them, an eye of my dear Charles. It was uncomfortable also when I ate my meals and the good soul the housekeeper said I would wear myself away if I continually thought that he was there at table. 'Let Madame go to the food distributers,' she said, 'and see if they will give out extra rations on account of our Monsieur.'

'You are indelicate,' I said.

'Of

'Of course one might succeed. You never know,' she said. 'It would be fine to play a trick upon the devils. Yesterday two hundred of us waited for the bread, and then it was so black and sticky that a dog would have refused it. I would like to play a little farce. And the two hundred of us opened up a lane like—like poor fools, so that the functionaries could walk out with baskets in their arms and in the baskets beautiful, white, lovely bread to take up to the people's representatives.'

The honest woman was extremely out of breath and at the same time she was most indignant. It has always been a riddle to me how she has survived the troublous years since Charles installed her at the house, for she is utterly outspoken. But, while she does not appear to take a thought respecting any danger she may run, she scarcely would permit me in the autumn and the winter months to go into the streets.

She did her best to frighten me by telling of the horrors which were taking place. One day, for instance, she came with a tale about the Fair of Saint Germain. It had occurred, I found out afterwards, three years ago. It seems that there was an exhibit of two heads

 which

which had belonged to Monsieur Berthier and to Monsieur Foulon. Two commissioners were sent to confiscate them and the owner of the booth was in despair, as he was doing splendid business. In addition to the heads he was exhibiting a human heart; to show it off to best advantage it had been transfixed upon a sword. And the musicians did not cease to play that well known air:

Non, il n'est point de fête,
Quand le cœur n'en est pas.

Then Marthe, the housekeeper, insisted that the luck I had in being brought to Paris by a high official of the Government, who once had been an actor, was the kind of luck which comes but seldom. It might be that various other ladies of the former aristocracy were moving in the town, but she considered it was rash. And only when I said that I would throw myself from off the balcony did she consent to let me wander out. It was on the condition that I never stepped into a shop, as it might be the shop of a fanatical republican who would denounce me for my cultured accent. If the worthy Marthe had not made this concession I believe that I should have gone mad; no doubt

 the

the centre of a whirlpool is the safest place, but if I were in prison I would beat my head against the walls. Marthe says I would do no such thing; yet she is a kind-hearted woman, so that nowadays I can go out a little.

On the very first occasion that I went into the streets I was much tempted to forget all prudence, as I found myself among a crowd which someone was haranguing. What he said was that the people were both good and great, and equitable and sublime; and that they had the right to trample on their enemies and crush them into powder, since their enemies, the nobles and the priests, had trampled on them and exploited them and lived upon their sweat and blood.

I thought of Charles de Keroubec, the best of husbands and of masters. He was never happy if he was not working for the happiness of others. And I thought of Cousin Bernard, whom I had unfortunately lost in England; he was always very good. I thought about the noble gentleman who was my comrade in the army outside Thionville; that gentleman was very, very good. . . . Yet if I had replied to him who was orating to the people I would have acknowledged that there are oppressors.

Human nature may be different in France from what it is in other countries, but with us it is the dream of the oppressed that some time they may rise to be oppressors.

I found I was being swept along in a vast multitude. From all the side streets other people joined themselves to us and they were singing a new revolutionary chant, which I who had remained for so long in the house had never heard. *Allons, enfants de la patrie* was the beginning. Someone told me that the Marseilles battalion brought it with them last July.[1] It suddenly transformed the roughest and most brutal faces; and I felt that people with a song like that were really good and great and equitable and sublime. Sweet and mysterious fingers drew me close to them. *Enfants de la patrie.* Oh, let us march together to great triumph! Brothers, sisters all around me. And my heart was pierced with joy. *Le jour de*

[1] Rouget de Lisle found himself at Strasburg in April 1792, when war was declared against Austria. At the request of Dietrich, the mayor, and in a fury of patriotic exaltation he composed in one night the words and the music of the famous hymn. It was at first known as the *War-song of the Army of the Rhine;* but being brought to Paris by the Marseilles battalion in July of that year, it received the name under which we know it.—*Trans.*

gloire

gloire est arrivé. Imperishable deeds awaited us. That song, that song—it touched our lips with immortality. What glorious exploit were we marching to?

The square was called Place de la Revolution.[1] It was filled with a tremendous crowd. And near to me, as it happened, was the guillotine. But if I had not recognised what was that awful instrument I would have learned it from a man with long grey hair who was beside me. He was murmuring as if in ecstasy: 'Oh, Mother Guillotine! Oh, Mother Guillotine!'

My knees were trembling. Would I see some executions? A big man, conspicuously dressed with gold lace on his scarlet coat and with a glittering helmet, was beside the guillotine. In order not to look at it I kept my eyes on him. He turned three taps at once, to let his liquorice-root water flow into the goblets.

When he moved the bells which hung all round

[1] It had previously been known as the Place Louis XV. On the outbreak of the Revolution the square had its name altered, while the statue of Louis was melted down for coins. Louis XVI, Charlotte Corday, Robespierre and other prominent personages were executed here. In 1795 the Directory gave it the name which it still retains, Place de la Concorde.—*Trans.*

his

CIVI OPTIMO
Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo,
et omnes in hoc sum
J.I. GUILLOTIN
Docteur-Régent, ancien Professeur de
la Faculté de Médecine de Paris.
Né à Saintes

THE INVENTOR OF THE GUILLOTINE

his wrists were rattling. Many of his customers were girls who, while they waited, used his helmet as a mirror.

I was faint, I felt I must get near enough to buy a glass. And so, forgetting what old Marthe had said, that I must never speak to anybody in the streets, I asked the long-haired man if he would make a little room for me.

He turned and then I saw that both his eyes were sightless. It was most amazing.

He perceived that I was in bewilderment.

'You are surprised,' he laughed, 'that I am here. Well, I am always here. My neighbour's little girl is good enough to bring me. It is one of my sole recreations. When the heads go tumbling in the basket—toc, toc—just like that, it is . . .'

And then, I think, I fainted. When I woke up I was lying in a side street and a man was there. I thanked him that he had watched over me.

'We brought you here,' he said, 'another citizen and I. When you are well enough to walk I will assist you to your home. Where is it?'

Thinking of no trap I told him.

'And why did you faint?' he asked. His eyes were narrowed.

'But

'But—but,' I said, 'this is the first time I have seen the guillotine.'

'You are a noble? I can see you are a noble.' He had the appearance of a snake.

'There are no nobles now,' said I.

Then for a little time, although it seemed a thousand years, he contemplated me. I wondered if he would decide to have me taken to the guillotine.

'You have,' he said at last, 'you have become a faithful citizen of the republic? We all have our obligations. One of them is to make sure that the republic is delivered of her enemies. To-morrow at the same hour as to-day you will be good enough to be at the same place, near Ferrier the excellent blind man, or else . . .'

XVIII

This twenty-third of April of 1793

As the man did not go back with me I could consider on the way what lie would be the best for telling Marthe. She quickly would demand to know what had upset me and the tale which I resolved upon was built around my Cousin Bernard. I had had a glimpse of him, so I

 would

would say. He was, of course, not in his clerical attire; but I believe that he is unmistakably a clergyman. He never could disguise himself as well as I can. And the priests have been so massacred. It gave me a tremendous shock to find him in this peril. I would say that I had not approached him and was therefore ignorant why he had come.

No sooner was I in the house than Marthe began to tell me quite a different story. It was not an April day at all, but one that weighed a person down like August. She had sweated very much, she said, for thinking of those German underclothes of mine—I still had those which the good gentleman had bought me when we were together in that eastern army.

'But you have a sympathetic soul,' I cried, 'to sweat on my account.'

'I also sweated on my own,' she said. 'It is a most unheard-of day. And you are looking as I knew you would. I ask you to lie down. You are already looking better since you came into the house. It is much cooler, certainly.'

So the good Marthe made everything quite simple; and the next day, when it was more temperate, she did not raise objections to my going out. If she had done so and the patriot

had

had come to fetch me! As it was he did not show himself, but during the whole time I was abroad I felt his eyes were on me.

Let me hope he saw the meeting of myself and Paul. The Paul of long ago, the coachman's nephew, has become one of the most important men. For instance, while he should have been presiding at the ceremonial of the guillotine he is so great that no one ever murmured when he said that he had other business and that he would leave a substitute. He came down from the platform, took me by the hand and led me through the multitude. He was kept very busy answering the cheers and smiles and salutations of his well-wishers, so that it was not easy for us to exchange a word. But I would take him home with me and then he would relate the brilliant story of his life. To think that when he was my playmate at the castle he was a poor boy with not a single friend beyond the boundaries of the estate! And now the mere fact that he walked with me would place me high in popular esteem.

Among the men and women who were pressing round us there was one tall woman with a rapt expression. Underneath her cap, which was a tricolour, dark strands of hair

 escaped

escaped untidily. In fact I did not like the woman.

Gradually our large escort was diminishing; the guillotine proved such an irresistible attraction. When we were upon the bridge, halfway across, Paul stood and faced those who were with us. He declared that he was very grateful for their kindness and he would be glad if they would leave him now, as he had private matters to attend to. The dark woman gazed at him as if he were a god, as if his language was not to be understood by man. When we set out again she was the only one who still came with us.

I enquired of him, by making signs, if she was mad.

He, in the same way, answered that he did not know and that she was a woman he had never seen before.

Apparently we two could have conversed on any topic, seeing that the woman was in such a state of exaltation. But we were embarrassed. After all, we somehow would get rid of her; and if this could not be effected in a more artistic manner, then there was my strong front door.

We really should have looked upon her with

 indif-

indifference, as there was always someone who was making a salute to Paul, so that it was impossible to plunge into the myriad things we had to tell each other. Those who greeted my dear Paul were artisans and ragamuffins, people who leaned out of carriages and some who were in tatters. He was very courteous to everyone, so that I found that I could not distinguish those who were acquainted with him and those who were merely his unknown admirers.

But not one of them admired him more than I did. All these people may have thought that his delightful courtesy and grace had been his birthright, handed down to him by ancestors who were preoccupied with beauty. Now, they may have thought, like certain others he had left his own class for the class he loved. But ancestors—I smiled to think of Cousin Bernard and of Polydore who once had said that for a boy of his condition it was a mere waste of time to learn the history of France. I did not know what was more wonderful, the skill with which he had assumed these outer graces—they went very well with the perfection of his body—or the cleverness which had enabled him to climb to such an altitude. My

 memory

memory of him was that he had not been exceptionally clever.

When we reached the house that woman was still there beside us and it seemed most probable that, if the door was opened, she would not remain outside.

With great politeness Paul addressed her: 'Madame, is there anything that I can do for you?'

She gazed at him and nodded.

'I am sure that it is for the benefit of the Republic. Will you be so good as to explain and I will do whatever lies within my power.'

'It is——' How masculine her voice was. 'But I am so weak—I am ashamed to be so weak. . . .'

'You have a friend who wants a post?' he said.

'No, no!'

'Or someone who is in a prison? But perhaps it is a complicated matter. We could talk it over quietly another time.'

'Please come a little way,' she said, 'a little way down there.'

'Go in,' he whispered to me. 'I will follow.'

'But be careful,' I implored.

The woman had moved several steps. He shrugged his shoulders and went after her. And I, when Marthe had let me in, I flew up to the balcony from where I could observe them. She was evidently once again in her exalted mood and Paul did not seem to be giving any answer. When they turned and slowly came in my direction I concealed myself behind a curtain. She was really handsome with her flashing eyes, her look as if the ragged clouds of night were mirrored on her face. And she was speaking rapidly. What could she be demanding of him? He did not seem to have any word to say.

Some people in the street were listening and they were much amused. He obviously told her this and that a man in his position could not let himself be laughed at. Then he added something very earnestly. He laid his hand upon his heart, to give her the assurance that his words were true. And finally one saw that she was satisfied and then she strode away, while I ran down immediately to let him in.

He sank down on a chair.

'Dear friend,' I said, 'she has been persecuting you.'

He answered that she was the most extra-

 ordinary

ordinary woman he had ever met. She first avowed herself to be an ardent follower of his and then incontinently asked him to become the father of her child.

'And you agreed?' I said.

'None of my colleagues has, so far as I know, been in such a situation.'

'Well,' I said, 'I have not seen your colleagues; but unless they are exceptional this woman is no fool. And so you told her that it would be done as she desired?'

He was a very pitiable object. 'All those loiterers were listening,' he said. 'If I had not agreed then Paris would have laughed at me, they would have laughed me out of my position.'

As he went on looking pitiable I said I would not ask him any more. He needed some refreshment and moreover we must celebrate, I said, with the best wine there was, our wonderful reunion. Would he please go down with Marthe to choose it?

He was very willing and, while they went off to where we kept my husband's wine, I fetched whatever appetising food—there was not much—we had to offer him. Most fortunately there was a large round of cake which Marthe had

made

made from one thing and another, as the bread one gets is really bad.

When Paul came back, a bottle in each hand, he said that would I pardon him, but how did I exist? He would be able to make everything much easier for me.

'So much the better; but,' I said, 'we have a thousand other things to talk about. And Marthe and I exist by selling ornaments. Before I came she managed by obtaining lodgers, but there is no room for one since I am here. Now tell me something I must know at once,' I said, 'How did you make yourself like this? You are the perfect cavalier.'

He held a finger up in warning, though he chuckled. 'I am the arch-enemy of cavaliers, he said, 'and the aristos. That is one of my chief tasks.'

'But,' I persisted, 'you have such manners now, that——'

'In other days,' he said, 'would I have known how to select this wine? One lives and learns. Now let me open it.'

I did not interrupt him while he did so with great care. And, as we sat down by the little table, I said: 'Yes, one lives and learns. But may I say it as you have become so mighty?

When you were a lad you did not seem to be as clever as all this.'

He started on the wine and so did I. The name of it I do not know, but he had chosen well, for it was beautifully sweet. And then he said my memory was excellent, that he had never been a clever fellow, only one with powerful convictions. When he ran away because—because——

I crossed myself. 'That gentleman was Charles de Keroubec,' I said. 'He has been killed.'

Paul bowed his head in silence.

'When you ran away,' I asked him presently, 'what did you do?'

'How long ago it seems!' he said. 'The Revolution was beginning. I was a mere straw. And I was flung—it is not worth while telling you about it. Many others, thousands of them, were aflame as much as I was. But how could I ever hope to help the people, seeing that I had no knowledge nor the slightest power? Then one day as I thought of you and of the dancing-master I began to imitate his manner and some folk were very pleased; they said that I was a polite and suave young man and that with good behaviour one could go extremely far. How true it is! I gave

 myself

myself the trouble and you see where it has brought me. I am brilliant on the outside, but I have no brains. I am a statesman.'

'Did you do it really all,' I said, 'by imitating Charles de Keroubec?'

'No doubt,' he answered, 'it was badly done. But it was good enough.'

I asked him if he had condemned a lot of nobles.

'Here and there,' he said. Meanwhile he had been drinking and his face was flushed and rather savage.

'Paul,' I said.

'Do you remember when I called you Yvonne? Please forgive me.'

'Why do you not say it now?' I asked. 'I want you to. But I was going to mention that if the tall woman were to see you as you are, she would not be so fascinated. It is bold of me,' I said, 'to speak like this to one who is as powerful as you. But we are such old friends.' He raised his glass and studied it. His lips were twitching.

'We are such old friends,' I said.

'That woman,' he burst out, 'she shall be guillotined.'

Had he gone mad? 'But first of all,' I said

 quite

quite gently, 'she is not against you in political ideas and then she——'

'She has caused me to be laughed at. It will be all over Paris.'

'But you said just now,' I pointed out, 'that they would laugh at you if you avoided her advances.'

'May the curse of all the demons light upon her!'

Strange that I was fighting for the woman's life. I felt so horror-struck to see how blood-thirsty he was.

'And if I have her guillotined,' he said, 'then they will laugh much more. I did it, they will say, to get away from her. How would it be,' he ruminated, 'if I do what she desires and afterwards have her destroyed? Thus nobody would scoff.'

It may be that I looked at him with loathing. Anyhow he said, as he stood up, that with his many duties we might well not meet again. He was divinely beautiful. 'Good-bye,' said he, 'and if I can do anything at any time for you. . . .'

But how could one delay his going? If indeed he should pass out forever! My deserted home!

'Fare-

'Farewell,' he said, 'and do not think too badly of me if you hear that I am stern. The day will come when it will not be needed. France will be a land of brothers.'

'Would you like to see my house,' I said, 'before you go?' And as I moved along he followed me.

There was a water-colour on the staircase which I never had paid much attention to. But now it struck me that the park it showed had some resemblance to my family's demesne, where Paul and I had played together. 'If the marble statue were removed,' I said, 'and then a clump of laurels put in over there one hardly would see any difference.'

He quite agreed and as he put his finger on a little hollow place he asked if I remembered how in one of our good games the poacher used to hide there.

'Yes, and this,' I said—I put a finger on the grass—'is where the rabbit was which he was going to catch.'

'And so the fellow did!' cried Paul, as with a sudden movement he seized not that finger only but the others also.

This incident caused us to laugh and we had not concluded by the time we stepped into the

bed-

bedroom. Paul broke off in order to admire it.

'Oh, you captured me, you captured me so well,' I said. 'Poor, little rabbit.'

'But I hope I was not rough,' said he, 'when I was squeezing you just now. That canopy is beautiful.'

'And what,' I asked, 'are rabbits made for if it is not to be eaten?' I sat down upon the bed. I smiled at him.

He was there in the middle of the room and he gazed about him with approval. 'You have the most perfect taste,' he said.

'One sleeps here very happily,' I said. 'And as for my good taste——' I smiled at him, but he took out his watch and said that he must go at once.

'If you come here,' I said, 'then you can see the canopy much better—all the golden stars.'

He strode up to the bedside, glanced at them and said that they were very fine. 'And may I kiss your hand,' he asked, 'before I leave?' I held it out to him. 'But will you really go?' I said.

He answered that his work demanded it.

I drew my hand back, for I meant to strike him in the face.

'Oh

'Oh, the elusive rabbit!' he exclaimed. 'But see, one catches it.'

When he had gone I rolled in fury on the bed. Those hateful stars were glittering with laughter.

XIX

This seventeenth of January of 1794

LAST year when I was treated in that way by Paul I settled to leave Paris and go back to Brittany. But I was numb, I could not rouse myself. All that I wanted was to stay in solitude, in darkness, like a wounded creature of the forest.

So the months went on. Marthe used to say that everything was for the best, because if I preferred to stay inside the house then I would be forgotten by the monsters of the land. We still had a supply of ornaments and when we had no money left she used to sell one. It was due to this that I began to touch the world again. She liked the dealer and one day she brought him to the house. She said that Monsieur Portefait was an amiable, old man. He was the kind of man, she said, who makes

 one

one sad because one has not known him earlier.

He shuffled in, a stout and shabby personage. If he had looked more drastic then his shaven face would have been like a Roman Emperor's; but there was bubbling in his blue eyes such a spring of friendliness that I rejoiced. Inevitably he would lay a dear, soft hand upon my arm and would declare that the depletion of my house must not continue and that for the future he would make me an allowance of a certain sum which I could pay back when I had my money.

'But how good of you it is that you have come,' I said.

'No, on the contrary, if anyone is good then it is you,' he said, 'for letting me behold the house of treasures. Several of the ornaments which I have had have been delicious. She has told me that they were collected by your husband. Certainly he understood.'

'I wish,' I said, 'that I had not been forced to sell them. But from now on—this I promise you—I will not let a single piece——'

His eyes were flashing as they turned on me. 'Beware,' he cried, 'of Armoule and Menestrier. They are two scoundrels. With so

many

many of the nobles in dire straits they have been purchasing most splendid ornaments and jewellery and furniture at prices which are quite unjust. What is it Cagliostro says? " Beware," says he, "of the city of Trebizond." He never told me why he gives that warning. But——'

' Thank you so much,' I said, ' for telling me.'

' Why? Do you want me to go there? '

' It is beautiful to say,' I said. ' " Beware of the city of Trebizond." '

' And those comrades I was talking of, Armoule and Menestrier—maybe you think those names are beautiful and maybe not. But I beseech you to be careful. If they come here let me know. You will have disappointment from them only.' There he sat, this Monsieur Portefait, and he looked on me in a paternal fashion. His two hands were holding one another over his fat stomach.

' You are very kind,' I said, ' and when my ornaments are sold, then. . . .'

' Oh,' said he, ' you doubtless can do something. Can you act, for instance? With your face and figure. . . .'

I had no great wish to speak to Monsieur Portefait any more. I told him curtly that I

had

had no thought of acting. As I only twice have been inside a theatre, on those occasions when my mother took me to the town—and both the pieces were extremely dull—I have since then not yearned to go there.

'If you have no thought of that,' the old man said, 'we must discover something else for you to do. You seem to be a little tired.'

'Very tired,' said I.

He pushed himself on to his feet and, saying that he hoped I would let no one have the ornaments but him, he waddled from my sight.

Then I determined that no single other ornament of mine should get into the clutches of this man. In preference to that—but if I were to be an actress! Alexandre Dalmines, he who rescued me when I was with the routed army, he could rescue me again. I noticed, all the way to Paris, that if he gave a command it was obeyed. As he was formerly an actor, he could tell them, I suppose, to let me take a part.

There is only one thing that I am afraid of. When the prompter reads it, and I say it after him, as they did at those plays I saw, one has to keep awake. And if I have to act in plays of that kind it will be so difficult.

 I never

XX

This twenty-seventh of Pluviôse (eleventh of February) of 1794

I NEVER thought that it would all be done so rapidly. When Alexandre Dalmines let me come to see him in his office he was very kind. He said that nowadays he did not keep abreast with what was happening in the theatre, because he had innumerable duties. On the last occasion he had gone, which was in August, that is to say, in Fructidor, he went in his capacity as an official, to be present at a patriotic play.

'You may remember,' he explained, 'that the Convention, which denounced the British Government to Europe and which passed a great variety of measures, issued on the next day a decree to settle and arrange the public entertainments. Pieces such as "Brutus" and "Caius Gracchus" and "William Tell" were to be given three times every week and one of them at the expense of the Republic. It was held that these were the most proper to maintain in our French hearts the love of liberty and of republican ideas. I went to one of the

per-

performances. We meant the citizens to have the very best examples of integrity and human justice. Ah yes . . . one hopes. . . .' He sank his head in meditation.

After I had waited for a little time he suddenly addressed me, asking what it was that I desired.

'If they will let me act in any sort of play,' I said. 'It need not be a very patriotic one.'

He said that he would willingly give me an introduction to a friend of his, the Director of the Théâtre de la Cité.[1] As he had not seen him for a little while he did not know if there were any vacancies.

It was most fortunate that when I took his note to the Director several days ago I came in just as he was screaming at a woman, one of the three women in a patriotic drama. They were in the midst of a rehearsal and this woman had a cold, so that you could not hear what she was saying.

The Director plucked the note out of my hand. He went on shouting at the luckless creature: 'No, I will not have you. It will ruin the performance.'

[1] This theatre was built in 1791 on the site of the Church of Saint Bartholomew. It had been intended to call the theatre after Henry IV, but owing to the political events this was not done.—*Trans.*

To my vast surprise the actress stamped upon the floor and said that she would tell her friend. At this he broke out into a grimace, as if he were a tiger making love. 'Dear little girl,' said he, 'so that is what you mean to do?' His fingers trembled so much that my note fell out of them. He picked it up and opened it. And then he looked down at the girl with absolute benevolence.

'Yes, well?' she said uneasily.

'I grieve to say it, but a lady has arrived with a more powerful protector. Alexandre Dalmines. Would you like to see?' He held it out for her. 'And consequently—ah, good-bye, my love.'

The other actors gathered round me and, so far as I could see, they did not bear me any grudge for having chased away their colleague. The Director, whose red face and big moustache were positively beaming at me, said that we must have a little private talk; and so I followed him to a far corner of the stage.

'It seems to me,' he said, 'that you have the dramatic instinct. What an entry! It was wonderful.'

I said I was so glad there was a part for me and I would do my best.

'You

'You will be our young second lover,' he announced. 'Your salary, because of Alexandre Dalmines, will be as if you were at the National Theatre—three thousand livres. You are Hyacinthe in this new play. We are rehearsing the last scene. So you can sit with Pompigny.[1] He is the author. You can keep him quiet.'

Then I got down from the stage and took a seat beside the little man, who was the only audience.

Upon the stage there was a guillotine. Two of the actors, one a man and one a woman, were conducted towards it by the executioner.

'Walk slowly, slowly, for the love of God!' wailed Pompigny. He was a nervous little fellow.

[1] This dramatist was evidently not unlike Marie Joseph Chénier, of whom it was said that he attached a tricolour cockade to Melpomene. This Chénier, who was held to be greater than his brother André, gave the public certain tragedies which they received with delirious joy. That did not prevent them from correcting the author. When one of the actors in 'Gracchus' exclaimed: *Des lois et non du sang!*, the populace protested loudly: *Du sang et non des lois!* Chénier's tragedies, and probably the plays of Pompigny, were full of harangues against the nobles and in favour of liberty. When the nobles had vanished, then these tragedies collapsed.—*Trans.*

'You molest them,' the Director said. 'They do it very well. Go on, my friends.'

'But no!' expostulated Pompigny. 'The people in the theatre will howl with patriotic frenzy. Their enjoyment should not be curtailed.'

'So that is it? And you would satisfy them to the end?' asked the Director. 'And you would allow them to drink this enjoyment to the dregs?'

'Why not?' said Pompigny.

'Give them a little less and on the next night they can all return. Oh no, you naturally did not think of that.' He turned to the two victims and requested them to do their final march again. 'And you, Varennes,' he said, 'you as the husband have to strike a worthy attitude.'

'What do you think of it?' said Pompigny to me. 'Not too banal, I dare to say. The husband hands them over, Mélisse and Brumaire—Brumaire is an ex-canon—hands them over as they are about to fly abroad for they are enemies of the Republican *régime*. They both confess, but it is not so simple. There is a development you have not seen. The wicked Brumaire offers to the husband a division of

the

the money which they have collected for the flight. Then does the husband's civic virtue triumph. He refuses. Tell me honestly if——'

The Director had been waiting for me. So I chose this moment to leave Pompigny. As I climbed back on to the stage I hoped that all his play would not be equally absurd.

'Oh, by-the-bye,' said the Director, leading me from where the others stood, 'I am not rabid in my politics. I do not even care if you are a Republican or not. But while you are with me I beg you to be friends with the police. Here is your part.' He gave me a few sheets of paper and advised me to go home and read them; and we would, he said, rehearse it on the morrow.

Considering that I had never acted in my life I think I was not very bad. And when 'The Republican Husband' was presented to the public I did not feel nervous, owing to the great enthusiasm. At the end of it, when Mélisse and Brumaire were ordered to the guillotine, there was a perfect pandemonium of applause and little Pompigny, with a red revolutionary cap, ran out of the wings. He started shouting to the people, but they would not listen. So

we actors formed a semicircle around him and we gradually curbed the people into silence. Pompigny was suffering from deep emotion. 'You have praised my piece,' he said. 'I thank you. It has been so high, this praise, that one might think I had achieved some splendid work of drama. But whatever merit it may have is due not to my brain but to my heart. I say that if the heart conducts the pen, then everything goes well. My dear ones, you will always take the husband of my play as an example. There is not a husband in this theatre who would not act as mine did.'

We who were upon the stage rejoiced as much as any of the audience. This was a play that gave tremendous pleasure. We were very glad indeed.

At last the audience consented to go home and we, the actors, groped our way along the dark and crooked corridors behind the stage. I happened to be singing to myself, when all at once I found that I was being pulled by somebody behind me, while he urged me to be still. 'The author has his rights,' he murmured. It was little Pompigny.

'But you are the great man,' I said, 'and I have only played a little part.'

'Hush

'Hush, do not speak,' he whispered. 'You and I will go together down the ages. It is marvellous. Good night, my love.'

The famous man had disengaged himself from me and he was starting off along another corridor without so much as having kissed me.

'Monsieur Pompigny,' I said, 'I want to talk about the ages.'

But the man had disappeared. It was Brumaire who came out of the shadows. Very grave he looked. He said that I must not allow this Pompigny to have his way. It was the truth, he said, that Pompigny was not a serious person. I would very much regret my friendship with him, if I let him have my friendship.

'With me, on the contrary,' he said, 'it would be permanent. From the first minute that I saw you I have been your slave. Oh, my beloved one,' he said, 'why can we not aspire to happiness? I am a simple actor, but——'

'Do not traduce yourself,' I said. 'The people were in ecstasy.'

'You really think so? Well,' said he, 'it is quite gratifying. I have laboured many years and wandered round the country. Treated like a dog, worse than a dog—have I not starved? What were we talking of?'

'You

'You were just making love to me,' I said. 'But now I must go home. To-morrow we will see each other.'

'Oh, what bliss! My life begins to-morrow.'

'Fare you well,' I said, as I departed from him.

'Do not go that way,' he called after me. 'Down there is the Director.'

And it was so. Where he sat the corridor was very dark; his feet were stretched out and I knocked against him. He informed me he was waiting to congratulate me on my first appearance. He was more than satisfied. The reason why he had not asked me to his office was that actresses are very jealous.

'You can offer your congratulations to the others also,' I remarked, 'for they were very good.'

'They might imagine,' he pursued, 'that I—it is a pity that you are the little friend of Dalmines. Will you pardon my abruptness? Usually one does not make love in so precipitous a fashion.'

'You are not the only one,' I said.

'That is so. We the children of the South, our blood is made of wine and sunlight. What a pity that you are the little friend of Alexandre Dalmines. Otherwise—what would you say

to

to it?—we might have had an understanding.'

'But, Monsieur,' said I, 'Dalmines is not a man like that.'

'Indeed!' said the Director. 'Well, I always have suspected him. Now listen to me. You will find it worth your while. We have a piece in preparation; it is by one Villeneuve and a good *rôle* can be given you. It has an edifying name: *No bastards any more in France.*[1] A father—this is in the play—refuses to acknowledge his poor son and so the boy has for his fathers all the patriots. It is a new law, a most admirable law, and so there are no bastards in the country. As I told you, I do not examine the political opinions of my actors. But I do not think that one of them can help approving of this law. Is there a land which acts towards its sons and daughters in a manner so enlightened? We are fortunate to live in such an age. It is the golden age. I mean in France it is the golden age. Our bastards will be

[1] Such hopeful titles were the fashion, for instance: *Au plus brave, la plus belle!* The populace had to be flattered. All the actors were decorated with the tricolour. Plays were given appropriate sub-titles, such as *William Tell,* to which were added the words: *or the Swiss Sans-Culottes.—Trans.*

singing

singing from the fullness of their hearts. That gives me an idea! You know, we often occupy the intervals with songs of praise to the Republic. In one interval we would request that no one in the audience is to sing except the bastards. We can have a bust of the Republic on the stage; a choir of bastards can advance to place a laurel wreath upon its brow. Much better than what usually happens, when they place the laurel on the author of the piece.'

'I too have an idea,' I said. 'You could request that in another interval no person is to sing except the author of a bastard.'

'Brilliant! I am going forthwith to my office to work out the details. So good-bye.' He vanished down a corridor.

As I continued on my way towards the street I felt that now I had become a part of this world of the theatre. How much more happy was my lot than that of good Brumaire who suffered in the little towns. To step at once on to the Paris stage was wonderful. And in the street I did not walk, I tripped along.

A hand was touching me upon the elbow. Will they never end, I thought, the list of men this evening? Who is it now? It was a woman. 'May I talk to you?' she said. 'I am the girl

 you

you met at the rehearsal.' She did not like saying that because of me she lost her situation. She coughed terribly. Her face was grey. How long had she been wandering in the streets? And I had thought—though it was little that I thought of her—that she was living under somebody's protection.

'Come back with me now at once,' I cried, 'into the theatre. The man is there still, in his office.'

But she shook her head.

And God was surely shaking His. 'Oh, listen to me, God,' I prayed. 'I did not mean to do this wrong.' God was already meditating on the life of the next person in the row.

'You need not look like that. I will not kill you,' said the girl. Her laugh was pallid as she drew a dagger from her breast and flung it from her so that it was clattering on the cobble-stones. 'Perhaps you want to give me up to the police,' she said. 'My name is Suzanne.' Then she leaned against the wall, her body shaken with the cough.

A wayfarer, a portly and benignant citizen, had stopped beside us. He was staring at Suzanne with much concern. 'You are not well,' he said.

'Is

'Is anybody well?' she asked. 'We all are sinners.'

He was even more concerned. He looked from her to me, to ascertain if I was capable of dealing with a poor, mad girl.

'Oh, she is coming back with me,' I said.

He made a sign so that I should go nearer to him. 'If you want some help?' he whispered. 'When they are like that it is no use to talk to them. I daresay you have been out here for a long time, trying to persuade her to be reasonable. But it is in vain, I can assure you. Force, that is the only thing. If you will take her underneath the shoulders—once we have her horizontal—I will seize her legs.'

'Suzanne,' I said, 'I want you to come home with me. Remember, you have promised.'

On her face one saw perplexity. 'There! Over there!' she said and pointed up the street in the direction of the dagger.

The philanthropist glanced hurriedly and then he murmured in my ear that the poor girl was under the impression she was being persecuted. They were frequently like that, he said. And he drew my attention to the fact that she was looking very wild.

'That foolish thing,' I said to her, 'I will not

 have

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have another word about it. I beseech you to come with me.'

Then she burst into convulsive sobs.

I waited for a moment, after which I put an arm around her. With the other arm I waved to the philanthropist that he should stand aside. Suzanne could scarcely walk and the deserted streets were longer than the longest ones which I had ever seen. From time to time Suzanne endeavoured to express her gratitude and when I silenced her she stroked my hand. I could not altogether stop her talking. She assured me she would always pray to God that He would look on me with mercy.

XXI

This second of Messidor (Twentieth of June) of 1794

SUZANNE and I lived very happily together. It was most enchanting for me to have somebody to care for. In the early days I used to run home from the theatre and only stop to buy some flowers or fruit; I knew that there was no necessity to run, for it was just as sure as hail that Marthe the housekeeper would be beside my Suzanne's bed.

At

At first she had received her rather doubtfully, because if on the one hand it was pleasant for me to have a distraction, on the other hand you were obliged to be so careful nowadays and what did either of us know concerning Suzanne's origin? This prudent attitude of Marthe's did not endure for half a week. Suzanne entirely captivated her. It was ridiculous to see how Marthe, in contact with the girl, became more clumsy than she was by nature. This was owing to her fixed belief that Suzanne was as fragile as a china figure; if she could have walked about, said Marthe, among the ladies of Versailles when they pretended to be shepherdesses, most assuredly she would have put them all to shame.

Suzanne was dainty as the dawn; and though she started to regain her health at once we would not let her leave the bed. And, by-the-bye, it was the other part of my bed. She could never, she asserted, feel quite comfortable with my husband's coat of arms carved in the wood, for she had never been protected by a person with a coat of arms. I also was not always very comfortable in the bed and that was owing to the crumbs which Suzanne left all over the inside of it. However, as the

 crumbs

crumbs were her crumbs I did not dislike them really.

One day at a shop that faced the river I had bought two little fancy birds whose colours was dark blue and yellow. As the dealer put them in a cage he told me they were male and female and that they would please.

Suzanne had never said a word about her parents. And while both of us refrained from asking her, yet now and then we would discuss the question with each other. Marthe believed that she had been abandoned and knew nothing. I preferred to think that Suzanne's home had been a very sad one.

I was talking of the way in which the dealer had selected those two birds. He groped about in a much larger cage, where it was dark. He found the female bird and then he caught another one and put it back. And still another one, which also he put back. At last his fingers closed upon a bird which satisfied him. He said this would make a splendid husband for the female bird.

'My mother!' cried Suzanne.

So she was going at last to tell us.

'It reminds me of my mother very much,' Suzanne continued. 'Often, often I have

heard

heard her say that if a husband is selected for you with the greatest circumspection or with none you can be just as miserable. And so——'

'My poor Suzanne,' I said, 'your home was not a happy one.'

'My mother used to say that a protector is much better always than a husband. If I knew where she is now I would enjoy myself.' She laughed at the idea.

'What do you mean?' I said.

'Well, I have followed her advice, and it is wrong, for my protector cast me off. He only wanted me because I was appearing on the stage and when they threw me out he did the same.'

'A man like that!' I said.

'The next one will be different,' said Suzanne, 'if I have any luck.' She really was delicious as she leaned back in the bed and smiled.

'Before you take another one,' said Marthe, 'bring him to us and we will help you to decide.'

But I could not endure to think of losing her. And so I said that if I went to Brittany she must come with me.

'Where is Brittany?' she asked.

 I told

I told her that I longed to see my home again, where I had been so happy. We would go together.

Marthe was frowning. Surely I must know, she said, about the combats in the west. There was d'Elbée [1] of the Vendéans, General of their army. 'What occurred to him?' said Marthe. 'They are so brutal. One of those who sat in judgment on him was called Colonel Fachot, of the revolutionary Engineers. I know about

[1] This officer (*b.* in Dresden in 1752, *d.* 1794) served as a young man in the army, but owing to the slowness of promotion he retired in 1783, married and lived on his small estate. He approved of the Revolution and, after the fall of the Bastille, signed an Address of Devotion to the National Assembly. But his religious sentiments swept him across to the other side. He was both pious and brave. His military talents, however, were insufficient; and as Commander-in-Chief, which he ultimately became, of the Vendéans, he was a failure. We read in the *Memoirs of the Count de Cartrie* that at least two of his officers, both of whom were 'very young in the art of war,' attempted to supplant him. In October 1793 at the battle of Cholet an irreparable defeat was inflicted upon d'Elbée. He himself, wounded in fourteen places, was carried by one of his horsemen to Beaupréau and from there he was transported to the island of Noirmoutiers. In January 1794 he was captured there, while in his bed. They sentenced him to death and, as he was unable to stand, he was propped up for the ceremony in a chair. His wife, who had refused to abandon him, was executed on the following day.—*Trans.*

it.

it. Fachot is an artist and made a picture, a most handsome picture of the poor d'Elbée and then he voted for him to be shot. I say that they have no pity. Stay in Paris. Do not go to the west.'

'But when Suzanne is well enough to move,' I said, 'then it may all be settled.'

'And before we go,' said Suzanne, 'if I am truly going with you, let us dine at one of the fraternal banquets which they write of in the papers.'

I was anxious also to assist at one of them. As I went to the theatre I sometimes saw the tables being spread in front of houses and the people gathering. It was considered that if you arranged this kind of banquet you were showing that you are a good Republican, equipped with civic sentiment. The *Journal de Paris* said that this was a habit of the citizens in classic times and since to live as they lived, or as we imagined they lived, was very popular, the banquets had a wide success.

I was still going to the theatre because in this way I could earn sufficient money for the house. They gave me parts in other plays. However, on some evenings I was not required and one of these it was when Suzanne and

 myself

myself resolved to go to one of the fraternal feasts. She was quite well again.

But she had only left the house, until that evening, for a few brief strolls. And as we sallied forth upon this enterprise I naturally thought of her as she was on the memorable night when she encountered me. The contrast was a happy one. In fact there did not seem to be a single cloud in all her sky. She was so nonchalant that it appeared to me she was not thinking of the future quite enough. Some day—I trusted a far distant one—would bring the end of our association.

In my street and in the next one we saw several tables being spread. The one at which we lingered and where they invited us to stay belonged to an austere old man, who looked as if he once had been a magistrate. He told me confidentially that this was the first banquet he had given and he would be very much obliged if we would help him with his guests. But for a time no other people stopped. The aspect of the host—who was indeed a former magistrate—did not hold out the promise of a very jovial entertainment. If we two could have gone on without offending him we would have done so.

We

We sat there with him and one or two of his companions who were like himself. Upon the table there were meat and bread in moderate quantities, as well as cheese, a little brandy and some wine.

'Our feast,' the former magistrate remarked, 'should not be too luxurious. In Sparta they detested luxury.'

A second, stiff, old gentleman, who had been putting down the knives and forks, said that he was not sure if knives and forks were used in Sparta.

'Well,' replied the host, 'we may diverge a little in external things. But let us do our best to reproduce the spirit of this ancient people. It is that which is of prime importance.'

'Very true,' observed his friend. 'One can be quite Lacedemonian, I maintain, and yet employ a knife and fork.'

'The spirit of that ancient people must inform us,' said the host. 'I perfectly agree with you. It is the spirit which we want. When they sat down, as we are going to do, the food was simple and there was much gaiety.'

'Let us be gay then,' said the other in a deep, yet hopeful voice.

A few young men were contemplating us and

 they

they were obviously undecided what to do. It struck me that if they sat down amongst us we would have more chance of being gay. I said this to the host and he invited them.

There was at first some feeling of restraint among us, for we were an ill-assorted company. As the old gentlemen made strenuous efforts to be gay so did the gloom descend more heavily upon us. After that it came about that Suzanne and myself and the young men paid less and less attention to the old ones.

When the lights were lit we still continued to embrace each other and, at last, when the old former magistrate broke up the feast, it had become, he said, excessively fraternal.

XXII

This ninth of Fructidor (*twenty-sixth of August*) of 1794

As you write a diary that stretches over several years or many years you must yourself be changing. It is true that the old Comtesse X. of my acquaintance was not in the least affected by the incidents that happened round about

 her.

her. She refused to let herself be troubled by them, whether they would have provided her with pleasure or with pain. And as a consequence, she altered no more than a rock and when she reached the age of sixty-five without a wrinkle on her countenance there came a young man who ran off with her. I am not jealous. I believe that we should change, both outwardly and inwardly.

But if the changes that occur in other people are not those which we expected, then we have to be most philosophical. At the dear Breton castle of the Keroubecs that person I regarded, when I lived there, with the greatest friendship was the bailiff. Though we left the management of the estate so much to him, yet he would not presume on this; and often if the men were at some heavy task, such as the dredging of the mere (we had to have this done as otherwise the odour was offensive) he would lend a hand; or if the men were working late at any task he would be there. My Charles and I remarked to one another that a man like our Philicien Tremel was a bailiff in a thousand. He did not engage in work around the castle only, where he would be seen by us, but in the most outlying parts of the estate. If it had

 been

been his own he could not have been more solicitous.

And now when Suzanne and myself arrived we found that Tremel had become the owner of the property. There was a sale, I learned, some time ago, and he had bought it. Those officials who put up the property did not demand a reasonable price. What did they care? . . . Of all this I was told before we reached the castle, as I stopped the carriage when I saw the venerable fisherman repairing his big net. The last time I had seen him was when we went down together to the shore on the dark night I sailed to England. As he told me now concerning Tremel he was in distress. He said that half the people were with Tremel, half of them against him.

'Sometimes he will strut along our street,' said the old fisherman. 'He holds one hand behind his back and with the other one he flips a greeting here and there.'

'But one must throw him out,' said Suzanne. 'Surely now that Madame has come back——'

'If I were you,' said the old fisherman, 'I would not go up to the castle. He is not the person that he used to be.'

'What

'What would he do to us?' I asked.

The fisherman took from his mouth a little piece of string and studied it intently.

'And where can we go to?' I demanded.

'When I told him that you would return some day,' said the old fisherman, 'he gave a laugh. Ah, there he is!'

Philicien Tremel was coming down the village street on horseback. He looked very satisfied. But surely he would be embarrassed when he noticed me.

'What are you going to do?' said Suzanne hurriedly.

My resolution had been made already. 'I shall be,' I answered, 'very gracious. It will make him even more embarrassed.'

'Well, you know the man,' she said. 'I hope you are not making a mistake. The whole thing is an outrage. I would murder him with pleasure.'

'Hush! Be still,' I begged her. 'Leave it all to me.'

We heard a shout. It was renewed—the shouter, with a cap of liberty upon his head, was leaning from an upper window.

'He must be half mad,' said Suzanne with contempt.

'It all depends upon what you call mad,' said the fisherman. 'The fellow's aim is to be Tremel's son-in-law. He is a good-for-nothing.'

'Tremel's daughters were fine girls,' I said.

'The youngest is the only one who is unmarried,' said the fisherman.

By this time Tremel was quite near. I had upon my face a very gracious smile. To my astonishment he was displaying one that was identical with mine.

'Madame,' he bowed, 'I am delighted that you have returned. A room is waiting and I see you have a lady with you. Everything will be arranged.'

As I was at a loss how to respond to this I glanced at Suzanne. But I could not meet her eyes.

'If one may say so,' said the man most courteously, 'Madame is looking very well, in spite of all her troubles.'

'And apparently,' said I, 'they are not over yet.'

His large face was as innocent as that of any child. 'But surely they are over now,' he said, 'for you are at your house again. Shall we be going up?'

His

His horse began to move. Our coachman also did not wait for me to give him any orders. He assumed that we were going to the castle.

'Did you ever meet a man like that?' I whispered to Suzanne.

'You said you knew him well,' she answered.

When we reached the castle he dismounted. There was at the door a servant who was new to me. Philicien sent him to the stables with the horse, while he himself began to take our luggage out. His amiability could not have been exceeded.

In my bedroom it was very dark, but as he threw the shutters open I could see that there was nothing altered.

'I will tell my little girl to bring some flowers,' he said. 'Perhaps Madame remembers Marguerite, my youngest child?'

Of course I did. 'And now,' I said—I was amused and not at all resentful—'now the little tomboy has become a châtelaine! How does she fill the part?'

He looked down at his feet and he was blushing. 'Naturally it is different,' he said. 'She does her best, but—and, besides, she wants to marry. Then I shall be all alone.' He

 turned

turned to Suzanne and explained to her that he had lost his wife some years ago.

'It will be easy for you,' said Suzanne, 'to find another one.'

His face was clouded over. 'But I will see Marguerite,' he said, 'about the flowers and that another room is put in order.'

When he left us, Suzanne, sitting by me on the bed, asked if I understood the man. Or was he so devoted to the first wife that he would not take a second one? 'With such a house,' said Suzanne, 'he could marry anybody in the neighbourhood. If I were you——'

I just had time to put my hand across her mouth, for at that moment Tremel came into the room with Marguerite. She curtseyed to me and as I got up—for, after all, she was my hostess—she looked thoroughly confused.

'Please, please,—oh, do sit down,' she begged. And then we had a solemn conclave on the subject of Suzanne's apartment. It was solemn on account of Marguerite, whose tomboy spirit had entirely vanished. She was now what one would call sedate. Her father said the dining-room would be at the disposal of my friend and me. Before I could protest he disappeared and—though it wanted some per-

 suasion

suasion—I made Marguerite sit on the bed between us.

'First of all,' I said, 'let me congratulate you on your coming marriage. We have seen the man. Do you intend to live down there?'

She nodded.

'Why not bring him to live here?' I asked. 'Your father will be all alone.'

'We told him,' said Suzanne, 'he ought to marry.'

'Oh,' said Marguerite. 'But I could not live in this castle all my life. It makes me feel so —so uncomfortable.'

'Yet there are no ghosts,' I said. 'You will get used to it.'

'I feel,' said Marguerite, 'as if I were a ghost myself.'

She told us on the next day why her father was so mournful when one spoke to him of marriage. He did not believe that any woman of his own class would be happy as the châtelaine and he was not so foolish as to marry someone from a class above him.

'He should really not have bought the place,' I said.

'He knows that now,' said Marguerite. 'And I am always thinking of what he will do

when

when I am gone. He will be very sad and lonely.'

It was seldom that he let himself be seen by us. And still more seldom did he vary in his mood, which was a mingling of the gracious and the mournful.

Sometimes when Suzanne and I were in the village or when we had climbed down to the shore it came to pass that one of the inhabitants approached me and spoke very bitterly of Tremel, even going to the length of asking me to join a plot against him. As I could not listen to such words about my host I subsequently stayed within the castle precincts. But the people did not in the same way interfere with Suzanne and she therefore used to wander round the neighbourhood.

One day when she came in with a large quantity of blooming heather and of various wild flowers whose names she mostly did not know, she looked so beautiful that I was hesitating to refer to an idea which I had thought of, namely, that our stay must not be permanent.

'I am so thankful,' said Suzanne, 'that I am no aristo.' She was searching carefully among the flowers.

'Of

'Of course,' I said. 'But has some new decree been made against them?'

Suzanne was astonished. 'And, besides,' she said, 'how should I know?'

'Then what is it that makes you talk of them?' I asked. 'You have been having a political debate with somebody? Who were you with when you were gathering those flowers?'

She said that she had been with Monsieur Tremel. But they had not spoken much of politics. 'In fact'—then she looked straight at me—'we two are going to be married. If you——'

'If I give you both my blessing? Certainly I do and very heartily.'

Suzanne was so touched that she seized my hand and kissed it. 'But it is not that,' she said. 'The one condition is that you shall—all this property was yours and it is right that of the revenues—you must allow us to send every month—when I suggested that to him he instantly agreed—if you do not accept then I will never marry him—and he and I will be the most unhappy persons.'

And that evening, after I agreed to her desire and his, we had a meal together which was most enjoyable: Philicien and his Marguerite,

the

the future son-in-law, Suzanne and I. We toasted one another and we sang all kinds of songs. And in the midst of it I said in Suzanne's ear that I did not know why Philicien Tremel did not give me back the castle. She admitted, with a fluttering laugh, that she did not know either.

'Then,' I said, 'you understand your bridegroom just as little as I do myself.'

'And he and I will be so happy,' said Suzanne.

XXIII

This twenty-ninth of Fructidor (Fifteenth of September) of 1794

Now I am on the way back to Paris and I think that I shall live there very quietly. The conversation which I had with the good landlord of this inn has made a deep impression on me. It was very kind of him to take me to his private chamber. I would have been much exasperated, so he said, if I had eaten in the public room, because a few officials would be there and what one gave them was—he could not help it—very different from what was put before the other travellers. While the officials

 had

had their fowl and game and pretty pastries, on the other table were old legs of mutton and inferior sweets.

The landlord's room was very nice and as it happened I did not come yesterday from a great distance. Therefore I was not so tired and, when the man discoursed to me, I made at intervals a seemly and intelligent remark.

So Henri Bonfils said this Government of ours is doomed. 'You will have seen,' he said, 'how people do not wish to take the paper money and how they dislike the coins even, the new coins that have got no royal effigy.'

'Yet they accept them,' I replied.

'There is no choice,' said he. 'The priests have told them that this money is accursed, for it is made of sacred vessels stolen from the churches.'

Monsieur Bonfils at this point was called away and I sat wondering if it was true about the sacred vessels. Also, were the priests—when all those thousands had gone out of France or else been massacred—were they still numerous enough to have an influence upon the people? As he came back into the room his rather flabby face was flushed with anger.

'Have they been insulting you?' I asked.

He set off pacing up and down. But since the room was small he sank into a chair, he sank as if he was an empty sack.

'What have they done to you?' said I.

'The host of any hostelry has to be jovial,' he said. 'And as I went in there I found a young man—with a mole upon his cheek, though he is tall and handsome—he was reading from the newspaper belonging to the Government. I wanted to be jovial and so I said: "Excuse me, can they always find sufficient truths to put into that paper?" "Yes, of course they can," said one of them. "Then why do they not put them in?" I asked.[1] There was an awkward silence and I rubbed my hands, to let them see it was a joke. What is there one can do with people who are deaf to jokes?'

'And were they angry,' I enquired, 'because you criticised that paper?'

'They denounced me as disloyal and they threatened me. I left the room, although they ordered me to stop.'

I was afraid of what would happen to poor

[1] It is interesting to see how a story, which was attributed, some years ago, to certain wits in England had been also heard in revolutionary France.—*Trans.*

Bonfils. 'You must take them in a specially good dish,' I said. 'While they consume it you can tell them that you are quite loyal.'

'I am not. And more than half the people here are not. We hate them all.'

I begged him to be prudent. I would go to bed when he went to the kitchen.

So he took me to my room, which had black beams across the ceiling and a splendid bed with curtains. 'Excellently I will pass the night in there,' I said, 'save that I am so anxious with regard to you.'

He said he would conciliate them if it could be done. But after he had left me I was burdened by oppressive thoughts. They were still with me when I had undressed myself and got into the bed. This landlord was too indiscreet. How came it that he had survived these years of turmoil? I was very doubtful if he would escape this time. What can one do with people who are deaf to jokes?

How long I turned these matters over in my head I do not know. The moon was still as bright as ever when I suddenly perceived that somebody was standing in my room and gazing at me. Unmistakably upon his face

 there

there was a mole. The landlord had been right, this young man was extremely handsome. Though my heart was palpitating I compelled myself to look at the intruder very calmly. It would be a terrible mistake to rouse the wrath of anyone in his position.

When he saw that he had wakened me his conduct was peculiar. He fell upon his knees beside my bed and, with his face completely hidden in his arms, he sobbed and sobbed, as if he would go on for always.

I was sorry for the man. I let my fingers rest, in consolation, on his brow.

'What have I done?' he moaned. 'What have I done?' He was in great despair.

'You have done absolutely nothing,' I replied.

'But yes—I am a ruffian—to invade your room—to—to——'

'So you have not come in,' I said, 'to talk to me of politics?'

I felt his body trembling. 'Oh, will you forgive me?—you have found me out,' he groaned. 'I am so despicable.'

If we were to go on talking somebody would hear us. So I laid my hand upon his lips. Oh, it was rapturous to feel them pressing,

press-

pressing. . . . Then the moon made as it were a halo round his head.

'My little saint,' I murmured.

He looked at me with deep adoration in his eyes. 'I will continue on the path of penitence,' he said. 'I grovel in the dust before you.'

'Do not grovel any more,' I said. 'Your fault is——'

'It can be explained. I will explain it.'

'We will leave that for another time,' I said.

When I had breakfasted this morning and the landlord came into my room he said that he had followed my advice and with his own hands had prepared last night a very special dish—a carp with a strong sauce of wine—for those officials; and he had assured them that he was no politician and had only meant to be a little playful.

'And so all is well. I see it from your face,' I said.

'The chief of the officials made the observation that I am as stupid as a carp. That put them in good humour and so I am safe, I think. And you, how did you pass the night?' He wagged a finger at me roguishly.

I stared at him.

'Ha!

'Ha! ha!' said he. 'You thought that you would be too anxious and that you would not sleep well. But in this bed of mine'—he went across and patted it—'you simply could not help yourself. Good bed, good bed.' He talked to it as though it was some animal. 'What do you think of it?'

'Oh, very fine indeed,' I said. 'Now tell me, please, when shall I be starting?'

'In a moment I will tell you. But about the bed—because it is so grand you must not think there is a drop of blood upon it. God protect me. I would not buy anything out of the looted castle of a nobleman.'

'When shall I be leaving you?' I asked again.

'That is what really brought me up,' he said, 'to see you. I am much afraid, in fact I know that you must stay until to-morrow. I am worried. Both your horses and the horses of that young official, the one with the mole, are indisposed. But he was very kind, that gentleman. He said that such things do occasionally happen.'

There

XXIV

This third of Vendémiaire (*twenty-fifth of September*) of 1795

THERE is nothing I enjoy more thoroughly than serious conversation. I am grieved that I have seldom found myself with people who were thus inclined.

It is because of his great power—so unexpectedly disclosed—of being serious that I am friends with Pompigny. When I came back to Paris it occurred to me that it would be quite pleasant to renew the bygone days and have a talk with the excited little author of the play in which I first appeared. After I had lived with him, however, for about a month I was beginning to be very tired of him. I understood what gives that illness to the ladies which they call the vapours. Pompigny, till then, behaved as if I were a child. He would insist on gambolling. And when I pointed out that I was interested in far different matters, in the fortunes of our land and in the changes that were taking place, for instance in the outlook and the morals of our citizens, he used to laugh quite uncontrollably.

At last one morning, very early, when I had been contemplating him with sharp aversion, for I never had seen any man less dignified when he was sleeping—later on I said that we would have to part. It was impossible for me, I said, to let him come there any longer. My whole stock of patience was exhausted.

Pompigny lay on his back. 'It is so true,' he said—as if he was discoursing to himself—'it is so true that those who govern in a land receive their greatest power from the patience of the governed.'

He was actually serious.

'The desolating certitude of this'—so he continued—'solves the riddle why the few can always dominate the many.'

'Pompigny,' I said, 'this is marvellous.'

He turned grave eyes at me. 'Not so,' he said. 'You will discover that the world is nothing but a battleground. The conquerors are very few.'

'Go on,' I begged him.

'Therefore he is happy who is a spectator, who can be removed from all those passions. In the *De Rerum Natura*, it is written——'

'My beloved little friend,' quoth I, as I leaned over him.

'It

'It is a noble passage:

Suave, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis
A terra magnum alterius spectare laborem.'

As he paused I could contain myself no longer. I embraced him with profound emotion. Every little hair upon his chin was leaping up to catch my kisses.

'You are pleased?' said Pompigny.

'My dearest one, at last,' I said, 'we have had worthy conversation, serious conversation. It is something to have waited for.'

'And do you like Lucretius?' he enquired.

'Well, who is that?' I asked. 'But anyone whom you like, I like also. We are kindred souls, my Pompigny.'

From that time onward our domestic life was much more pleasant. I would tell him now and then to let us have some earnest conversation and he never failed me. Sometimes even he began it of his own accord. I think that really it delighted him as much as it delighted me.

How good it is if you are happy in your home when there is turmoil going on outside. As the ferocious period came to an end the citizens were so relieved that they ran wild. I heard

 from

from Pompigny that there was a good deal of dissipation and that in the theatre the plays were frequently immoral. Since the period would pass away he thought it better—I agreed with him—that I should stay at home.

Sometimes I was yearning to go out, but he dissuaded me. I recollect, for instance, one occasion. We were sitting by the window of the salon.

'Do you see that flock of goats?' he said. 'The children of the rich are suckled by them. It is very hard to get a human nurse, because the humbler people have imbibed republican ideas. You cannot go into a world which is like that. I mean the world of goats, the world of luxury and licence.'

'But,' I argued, 'it may be amusing.'

'It is dangerous,' he said. 'That lady over there—a tunic as in ancient times, a girdle, nothing else. Those who are the most elegant have thrown away their corsets and chemises. Do you think that they will not catch cold? The only part of them which is protected is the lower portion of the front. It is becoming fashionable to simulate that one is going to have a child.'

And so I promised him that I would stop at

home.

home. But as month followed month and I saw nobody save Pompigny and Marthe, I kept on asking him when he believed this period would end. 'If I remain for ever in the house,' I said, 'then I will die.'

'If you go out with no chemise,' he said, 'then you will also die.'

Yet ultimately he consented that—in order to be told about the period—I should betake myself to Martin, the diviner.

'It may be some use,' said Pompigny. 'The women go to him when they have lost a lover or a dog. He is quite celebrated.'

That is how it happened that I went to Martin. My old housekeeper went with me, as she said that in the Rue d'Anjou there would be people of no character, all waiting to get profit out of Martin's clients.

We went in a carriage, but not all the way. It seemed advisable that we should not be too conspicuous and therefore we dismissed the carriage in a neighbouring street.

'Walk slowly,' said the housekeeper, 'for I have several things to say.'

'You might have told me them before we left,' I said, 'or in the carriage.'

'No, I could not. In the carriage I was

 occu-

occupied,' said she, 'in praying to my saint that he should intercede for you. I trust that all your wishes for the future will be granted. If he tells you that you will be having in two weeks or three a different gentleman then will you ask him, please, if we might fling out Monsieur Pompigny at once?'

I did not know till then that she disliked him.

'But what makes you think,' I said, 'that I am going to ask about such matters? It is not my future I shall ask about at all, it is the future of my country.'

'Here we are,' said Marthe. 'That must be where he lives. I knew there would be loiterers enough. Maybe that he will tell you what the name is of the other gentleman. Then it would be a good idea if we go on and find the gentleman. We could propose that he should come at once.'

It was amazing. 'Marthe, how can you dare?' I said.

'Well, no doubt you are right,' said she. 'One should not make a prophecy occur when it is not yet due. But we can make the preparations if we know the next one's name. A little cake with his initials on it, painted on in sugar. Would not any gentleman be gratified that one

should

should be expecting him like that? And Monsieur Pompigny can see the cake,' she said maliciously.

I was about to tell her that I would not listen to another word. But I was too much taken up by all those people in the street and in the courtyard. Men and women, rich and poor, and some of them in groups, consulting eagerly together, others by themselves were pacing to and fro with agitation written over them, and some with cruel eyes were looking on. Then I bethought me of an utterance of Pompigny, that it is preferable if you can be a spectator only. Martin's prophecies would not be happy ones for all these people and so many would go out in greater wretchedness than ever.

A tall, shabby man approached me, smiling as he came. He said, and it was obvious, that one could not have access to the prophet very easily. But he had influence and if I cared—he would not ask, he said, if he were wealthy—if I cared to give him a small honorarium he would arrange it that I would not have to wait for long.

I had not the least notion what one pays in such a case; but Marthe appeared to know by

 intui-

intuition. The tall man accepted gracefully the money that she gave him and conducted us at once up a dilapidated, winding staircase to an anteroom. In this were several other persons; but he whispered to us that their business was not of a lengthy nature.

Thus it proved. I took out of my bag the piece of paper on which I had got the query. Yet I was so interested in the people sitting there and most of all in watching them as they returned out of the prophet's room that when my turn arrived I had forgotten that I had this paper in my hand.

The room that I was ushered into was a small one; but it was extremely dark and for a moment I could not discern the prophet. Then I saw his glittering eyes. He spoke in a low, solemn voice and in Italian, as I had been warned he would do.

'Most unluckily,' I said, 'I cannot understand Italian.'

'Then I must talk French,' said he. 'I am a Frenchman. What do you desire to know?'

By this time I was more accustomed to the gloom and I could see in front of Martin, on a table, was a skull crowned with a wreath of

 pop-

poppies. There was also a large open book and several packs of cards.

The prophet seized a pair of crutches and leaped out into the middle of the room.

'You have been here before?' he asked. 'No? Then I beg you not to be afraid. A man of my profession has to keep his room like this, in darkness and disorder. Otherwise they think one cannot be a skilful prophet. Have you got your question there?' He pointed at the paper.

When I gave it him he frowned and started moving up and down the room without his crutches. He was moving like a crab.

'I hope you have not worked too hard to-day,' I said. 'If you would sooner I will come to-morrow.'

He continued his weird progress and then suddenly he jumped on to the table, where he crouched. He put his hand upon the skull and when he spoke his voice was even lower than it had been.

'This old friend,' he said, 'who once was a Franciscan monk, will make an august revelation. I will try to follow him with no help from the cards by merely touching with my other hand this atlas. Let us see. Have

you

you been anywhere outside of France? Of course, if you have been an *émigrée* you need not fear I shall denounce you.'

As I mentioned that I had been for a little time in England he turned up that country, laid his hand upon it, laid the other one upon the skull of the Franciscan monk and then he closed his eyes.

It was not long I had to wait. 'Now listen,' he began. 'This period of the history of France will be of short duration. France will rise again to greatness. I can also tell you of yourself, that you will be alive for many years.'

The whole way back I thought of what I would be saying soon to Pompigny, that I could now, with not the slightest risk, go as the fashionable ladies do, discarding my chemise. Since I was going to be alive for many years I need not be afraid of catching cold.

Marthe wanted very much to hear what words of omen the diviner had pronounced; but when she saw that I was throbbing with excitement she declared in a maternal voice that she was glad, most glad. Her supplications to the saint, she said, had been successful.

'You must not be rude to Monsieur Pompigny,' I threatened her.

'It

'It is not my nature to be rude,' she said.
And, till we reached the house, I sat in my part of the carriage singing to myself with joy and Marthe was doing much the same.
When I described the whole affair to Pompigny he said that he was not astonished that this period in history would soon be over. He himself had thought so. As for me and my long life, he said that this relieved him of responsibilities. From now on I could go abroad. I could do anything that pleased me. So it came about that I would sometimes go with Marthe to buy provisions—everything was horribly expensive—or I went with Pompigny to take the air.
One day a friend of his saluted us. It was a gentleman who there and then proposed that I should take part in a fine festivity. This, he explained, would be on a much bigger scale than all the rest of them, the festivals in honour of the Aged and of Agriculture, for example, and the philosophic festivals we owed to Rousseau. This one, said the gentleman, was to be held upon the first day of Vendémiaire, which is the first day of the revolutionary year. In other times that was October. On that day of equinox the Sun, as I would probably

 remem-

remember, sailed into the region of the Scales: and all this would be represented at the festival upon the Champ de Mars. Would I be one of the four seasons in a chariot?

Though I consented inwardly with joy, yet I asked Pompigny for his opinion. One should always show the little courtesies to gentlemen whom one is living with.

Some of his own friends at the theatre were taking part in it. He saw no reason why we should not both give our assistance. He would drive a chariot.

All the charioteers, however, had been picked. Another *rôle* would be reserved for Pompigny, one that would give more scope to his dramatic prowess. What if he collaborated with the attributes of royalty? They would be burned amid rejoicing. Would he take this *rôle*, that was of such importance?

From then onwards Marthe and I were very busy. We were given the material, a large quantity of muslin, as the dress had to be made with ample folds. The sleeves were fastened on with ancient cameos and other cameos had to be fixed both at the shoulders and the belt. I was provided with a splendid shawl of cashmere, which is a great rarity and most expensive. We

did

did not have to make anything for Pompigny, because he borrowed his out of the theatre. If we had had rehearsals then I would have known who was to be my charioteer, for on the fateful morning as I stepped into the chariot I beheld that it was being driven by Paul Garnier, the comrade of my early days, who afterwards had risen in the Terror to such eminence. To tell the truth I had not thought of him for a considerable time. I had succeeded in erasing him out of my memory. His conduct when we met in Paris had been disappointing. I was glad that Pompigny was somewhere else, because to meet each other so entirely unexpectedly and both arrayed in classic garments was not like a meeting that one ever has, it was much more as if a special earthquake had projected us into each other's arms. The coolness of our last encounter was obliterated. We were chattering and laughing, as we used to do, long years ago, when we had played our poaching game.

This recollection saddened me. 'Now there is no one left of that old time,' I said, 'except us two. My mother and my brother and my Cousin Bernard——'

'But your cousin is alive. He has become the

 chap-

chaplain of a lady, Madame Grand. They call her "la belle Indienne." She and your cousin are in England. It is not more than a week since I was told of them.'

As I was going to ask him half a thousand questions the two horses in our chariot started of their own accord and nearly jerked me out. The whole procession moved along. In the first chariot of all there stood a mighty statue of Apollo. This was the triumphal chariot of the Sun. The harness of the twelve white horses was of gold and purple. At each side there walked six girls who were the hours and after them the chariots of the Seasons—

I was Summer. Then there marched the music-makers, playing lustily, so that in any case we could not talk.

I would have liked to tell the public, present in large numbers, who I was. They did not look as if they knew and therefore I sat in the chariot smiling at them. How else could I show that I was Summer?

Their dull, unresponsive faces did not stop me smiling. Paul, a chieftain, of the Revolution, now the mere conductor of a chariot! And this news of my Cousin Bernard!

Drops

Drops of rain were falling and the citizens were putting up umbrellas. Now they would not watch so closely if we shouted.

'Paul,' I said, 'do not turn round, but answer me. I want to know about that woman, Madame Grand. Why does she need a chaplain? Tell me all about her.'

'Every man becomes her slave. She was in Paris here. She fled to England in the Terror. When she reached the port, with a few livres in her pocket, a young officer appeared and fell in love with her at once. He took a friend and came to Paris, where he rescued her belongings—money, dresses and gold plate.'

'How did she find my Cousin Bernard?'

'That I do not know,' he said. 'I wish we were at home. This rain is getting horrible. Are you at the same house?'

'But I am not alone,' I said. 'This festival is imbecile. We imitate the ancient Greeks and——'

'I most bitterly regret the past,' he said.

'And who does not,' said I. 'We imitate the Greeks, as if we had their gods and their blue skies. What fools we are.'

'Is it permitted that I call you Yvonne, as I used to do?' he asked.

'But

'But why did you not try to ascertain,' I said, 'if you could find me here in Paris?'

He looked round a moment and the truth was talking out of his brown eyes. 'I was ashamed,' he said. 'They guillotined my colleagues, some of them. I bowed before the storm and I am tolerated now by the Directory.'

'It shows your cleverness,' I said.

'My cleverness! When I had met you in my days of glory I lost sight of you again. How could I do it after the dear, distant time? You say another man. . . .'

I wondered how soon Pompigny would start his burning up those royal attributes. There was no smoke, but in such rain one scarcely could expect it.

'Paul,' I said, 'I like you more as you are now than when you were a famous man.'

His irresistible brown eyes were bent on me. Yet I did not like very much that he and Pompigny should meet. So often I had thought that I would rid myself of Pompigny.

'Suppose,' said I, 'that we. . . .'

'Oh, it is far more than I have deserved,' he said; and, having spoken, he held out his left arm horizontally, regardless of the rain.

'What are you doing?' I demanded.

'This

'This,' he said, 'is the most splendid day. I swear that from now onwards till the last hour of my life——'

I had to interrupt him. 'Paul,' I said, 'let us not bind ourselves. If we can stay together for a little time our love will make that time eternal.'

He was rigid as a monument.

'And now,' I said, 'it will be nice to follow the example of the other Seasons. They have taken shelter somewhere. Drive in the direction of that building.'

On the way I thought of how to free myself from Pompigny. Well, if there was no other method, Marthe, would be delighted to assist me.

XXV

This twenty-seventh of Thermidor (fourteenth of August) of 1798

After all these months we have at last brought Cousin Bernard back to France. Paul and myself sent many messages, but he would not abandon Madame Grand.

I am so charmed with her—blue eyes, dark lashes and as graceful as a willow. She has

told

told me her career, how she, her parents being French—was born at Tranquebar, a little Indian place belonging to the Danes. She married Grand, a solid Englishman, and though she had a double wedding, Catholic and Protestant, she was unhappy. Then there came a Philip Francis,[1] a functionary. He came one night when Mr. Grand was absent; he ascended by a bamboo ladder, which his servants brought. The servants of the house collected near it, there was a great scene and Madame Grand sailed by herself to Europe. She was for a time in Paris, making many friends, and there she had her portrait painted by Madame Vigée-Lebrun. The Revolution happened and the porter of her house, a Swiss, was killed before her eyes. She fled to England.

I am not sure whether it is she or England which has had the good effect on Cousin Bernard. All the angles in him are blurred over. In his company it seems to me that I am dancing a sad, lovely dance which was begun at the beginning of the world.

If he and Madame Grand, my dear friend Catherine, could spend their days with Paul and me then all the four of us could live in

[1] Afterwards Sir Philip Francis, the reputed author of *The Letters of Junius.—Trans.*

peace.

peace. They come to the Rue des Saints Pères very often. We play cards, which none of us play well, and we converse about all kinds of things. And sometimes Paul and I go to the mansion where she lives and where my Cousin Bernard has a room; but then we cannot shut ourselves away from other people. There are many who frequent the house.

Among her friends the most important is the one who was the Bishop of Autun, Monsieur de Talleyrand, a leading statesman. There is no secret as to how he is with Catherine, especially since she was able to divorce her husband, whom she has not heard of for the last five years. I always am so glad when Talleyrand comes limping down the vestibule, because he never is without a quantity of interesting information. I confess that when I met him first I asked myself why such a man is linked to Catherine. It is easy, here in Paris, to have women who are beautiful and clever also. But one day he said to me that she reposes him.

'She has deficiencies,' he said, 'but who has not? I told her yesterday that Denon the great traveller was dining with us at my house and I requested her to read a book of his

 before-

beforehand. At the shop, however, she could not recall his name, except the last two letters. She remembered that it was a book on travel; so they gave her the adventures of our old friend Robinson. She never in her life had heard about that book and it enchanted her. All afternoon she read it and at dinner, having waited for a favourable moment, she enquired of Denon if he had good news of his retainer Friday. . . . I have enemies,' said Talleyrand, 'who trust that she will make me so ridiculous that I will fall. But in the meantime I am happy.'

'They are envious of you,' I said, 'your enemies.'

'What are you smiling at?' he asked.

'To think that I should talk to you as if I had been moving among statesmen all my life!'

'Was not your friend Paul Garnier a statesman too?'

'But that is different,' I said. 'Besides, he is no longer in the big position.'

'How long shall I be in mine? No doubt you know that France is full of discontent. Those who are now in office, the Directory, do not excite enthusiasm. What is one to do?'

I said I really could not tell him.

'Some

'Some of us believe,' he said, 'it would be opportune to place a general upon the throne. There is Macdonald, there is Bernadotte, a sagacious fellow, there is Joubert. Shall I tell you who would be the best man?'

'If we have a king,' I said, 'will everything be as it was before?'

'One always hopes,' said Talleyrand, 'that mankind is ascending. And it *is* ascending, I assure you. If I did not think so I would—though it is a sin—I would destroy myself.'

'Monsieur de Talleyrand,' I said, 'may I put in a small request? Will you cause Cousin Bernard to ascend? My mother would have had him made into a bishop if she had survived or if there had not been a Revolution. He is very good.'

'All things are relative,' said Talleyrand, 'but no doubt he is good enough. However, we will talk of him another time. If I had not been in a hurry now I would have told you something more of General Bonaparte, who is conducting the campaign in Egypt.'

He looked serious.

'Monsieur de Talleyrand,' I said, 'I am not one of the wise women. What is there that I can do?'

'Well

'Well, I knew somebody,' said he, 'who used to say that when two persons have done a great work together they are friends. As we are friends, Madame, let us endeavour to accomplish a great work.'

XXVI

This first of Floréal (twenty-first of April) of 1802

Often in the last four years I fancied that Monsieur de Talleyrand avoided me. But yesterday he came to see me at my house where, since the marriage of my dear friend Paul, I have been living all alone. In a most kindly way Monsieur de Talleyrand enquired how it had come about. I told him that there had not been the slightest quarrel. Until the last day before he went we were caressing; for he always had been, since the time we found each other in that chariot on the Champ de Mars, most irreproachable in his affection. Yet there have been in the air these moral theories regarding marriage. One could hear it everywhere that marriage is a worthy institution, one to be encouraged. And both Paul

 and

and I considered that we were not made to marry one another.

'I congratulate you heartily,' said Talleyrand.

'We had several reasons,' I remarked.

'You need not tell me them,' said he, 'for they concern you only. And your friend has married someone else?'

'She is a country girl,' I answered, 'and their marriage is a great success.'

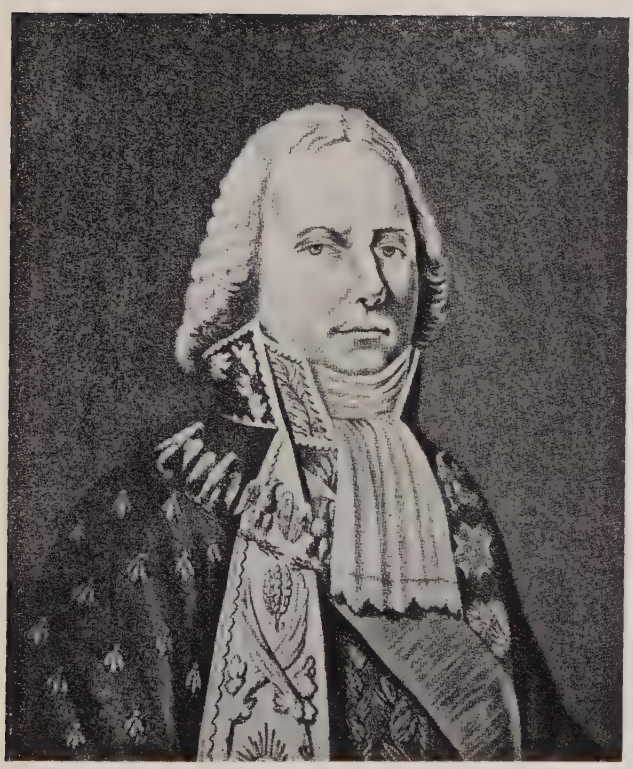
'You know,' said Talleyrand, 'it is precisely on that subject that I have come here for your advice. Because I occupy a prominent position—after the First Consul the most prominent of all—it seems I have to regulate my life according to these fashionable morals. Bonaparte has given me a little time to settle whether I will marry Catherine or separate myself from her. He says that I shall either be a husband or a cardinal. It is a grave mistake for me to marry.'

'But our Catherine . . .'

'She has gone off,' he said, 'to speak to Josephine, the Consul's wife.'

'Then you will be compelled,' said I, 'to marry. She is on the best of terms with Josephine, I know, since she presented her with a small monkey. Have you come to

 ask



CHARLES-MAURICE DE TALLEYRAND, PRINCE OF BENEVENTO

first moment I was not afraid. It would have been dishonouring my ancestors.

Napoleon was in the chapel, actually there before me. At his elbow was the groom, with a great deal of oil upon his hair, and facing them were the Archbishop and the other clergy, who included Cousin Bernard. The resplendent Emperor was telling them, most kindly, how he meant the Church to act.

When he perceived me he continued with his exposition, but appeared to talk more quickly than he had been doing. I looked at the clergy, and so far as I could see not one of them so much as glanced in my direction, for the Emperor was holding them completely.

'. . . and that is what I have resolved,' he said. 'Madame,' he turned to me, 'you have assisted at a notable discussion. Let us now proceed to private matters. It is owing to his own desire that he is a lieutenant still, because I wanted yesterday to give him his promotion. He requested me to let him earn it on the field of battle. Gallant fellow! He shall have no lack of chances and if he does not ascend into the highest ranks I will be very much surprised. Now we are going to celebrate this wedding.'

The Archbishop and the other clergy grouped themselves and Lartiffe took his place beside me. . . . As the ceremonial was in progress my own thoughts flew back to long ago, when Cousin Bernard used to be my teacher in the history of France. It was the fourteenth Louis he had loved to talk about. But if he were to give instruction to some other children—mine, perhaps—would he not sooner tell about Napoleon? My heart was melting at the thought of the vast greatness of this man, who told archbishops how the Church should act, who made lieutenants into generals and marshals, who commanded all the country, cast a shadow over other countries and had deigned to bring about my marriage. There was thus a link between myself and this tremendous man.

'Let us thank God,' said the Archbishop, 'that He has united His two children.'

Most devoutly did I thank Him. But I doubted whether one could call Napoleon a child of God. Was he not something more than that? At last I found that I was standing up. The Emperor had been obliged to leave the ceremony in the middle of it. And upon my husband's arm I left the chapel.

We did not say much to one another as we

drove

reputed gourmet, argued that one has no need of soup. Considering that Carême has a multitude of recipes—he hopes to get five hundred—he quite naturally disagreed. "I am not a classic," said Carême. "I have—and God be thanked—destroyed too much and built it up again; but there is one thing in which I can brook no alteration and that is at the commencement of dinner to partake of a small quantity of soup, some well-descended, unobtrusive soup." '

are glad to learn that Apicius was considered to be a master of the science, because he discovered how to retain the freshness of oysters; and that Anthony, being pleased with a dinner, presented his cook with a town. We are subsequently told of the Barbarians who lived on 'horrible ragoûts' and of the Arab invaders who, according to the Marquis, could not remain by the Mediterranean shores of Europe because they were forbidden to drink wine. It may be that the Marquis does not possess 'all the excellencies that narration can admit,' which in Johnson's opinion was the case with Richard Knolles' *History of the Turks;* but he has much of interest to say. 'The English Government,' says he, 'which we copy, for it is so positive, so powerful and so vivacious, has gained a considerable influence over Parliament by means of dinners. . . . Out of the midst of the kitchen smoke which envelops London the statesmen of England direct the world. . . . From the time of Walpole it is eating which has in London been the basis of representative government.'—*Trans.*

The

XXX

This second of Nivôse (twenty-third of December) of 1804

THE divorce was carried through most rapidly, since we were to be married in the Emperor's presence and he did not know how soon he would be setting out for Milan.[1] But in order to display his pleasure at the marriage he was dressed in his imperial costume, the white satin vest and pants, the white shoes with the gold rosettes and the red velvet coat, embroidered lavishly with gold and diamonds. He carried on his breast a diamond star and round the feathers of his hat there also was a band of diamonds. It was an unbecoming costume for a small, fat man. It made him look as if he were the King of Diamonds.

I should have said that this was in the evening at nine o'clock. I had been fetched in a great carriage with four horses and we drove to the Archbishop's palace. On the stairs of it were men in livery, a row of them at either side and each one holding up a torch. But after the

[1] He went there in the first part of 1805 and, with almost indescribable magnificence, was crowned with the iron crown of the ancient Lombard Kings.—*Trans.*

first

When we were putting down our glasses, 'It is strange,' she said, 'about the Emperor. He takes a meal in less than fifteen minutes: some polenta and some onion-soup and a roast chicken. But he is a kind protector of the cooks. He recognises that their art is of a huge importance. When he had a meal, not long since, at Monsieur de Talleyrand's he sent for Boucher and for my Carême. Now would you like to know, my dear, how to retain your future one's affections?'

'Pardon me,' I said, a little stiffly, 'but do you retain them?'

'Not at all, my dear,' said she. 'We have agreed that we will hold each other in respect. Lartiffe is always sure that his beloved general knows best and I will carry out the wishes of my heart.'

'Everything is most convenient,' I said.

She nodded. 'As for keeping him,' quoth she, 'I am the daughter of a cook-house and I won him with those admirable hams of Bayonne, out of which one makes the pâté. Always have one in the house, my dear, and hang it in a cool place with a cat not far away, to scare the mice. Every now and then, at proper intervals, I let him have his pâté. Never did it fail in its result.'

'But

'But surely,' I objected, 'it would make him fond of you and not of me. Can I not hold him with some other means than food?'

'Some other means? That is a new idea,' she said. 'Ah,' she resumed more brightly, 'yes, of course it can be done. You only have to ask the Emperor to tell him to continue loving you.'

'But is that love,' I asked, 'which can be ordered?'

'Well, oh well,' she said in a bewildered way. Then suddenly her doleful sea of shadows was illuminated by a brilliant harbour-light. 'As for love,' she said, 'my Carême calls a soup the "well-beloved of the stomach." He was much afflicted when he heard that the Marquis de Cussy,[1] prefect of the palaces and a

[1] Judging from an essay by this gentleman, which is included in Fayot's *Les Classiques de la Table* (Paris, 1843), he seems to have been misunderstood, for in that he says distinctly that he is not against a moderate amount of soup. Although he declares it to be the nourishment of women, children and aged persons, yet if one is hungry he pronounces it to be as beneficial as a few handfuls of good earth cast upon the surface of the land on which you mean to sow. The Marquis, who alludes to Carême as 'grand maître,' touches in this brief essay on many points. 'Cooking is an ancient art,' he says, 'which goes back to Adam.' He does not trouble to give us his authorities; but we

 reputed

had ascertained when he would be away on duty. At the house Madame Lartiffe herself came to the door. She was as big as the lieutenant and her face was red and shiny. Both her sleeves were rolled up to the elbows. She had been at work.

I asked her to excuse me, if I interrupted her. She grinned all over her wide face. 'So it is you, my dear,' she said. Then she exploded into laughter.

'If you like,' I said, and though I feared that she was setting me a trap, 'I will come in,' I said.

'We have a quantity of things to talk about,' said she, and stood aside for me to pass.

When we were in the little room, which was too full of furniture, I did not have to settle hastily what I would say, because Madame Lartiffe began as I was sitting down, and she was opening a cupboard.

'Naturally I have thought about it a good deal,' she said, 'since he informed me. What would you prefer to drink?'

'Whatever you may have,' I said.

'It would be nice,' said she, 'to drink to his great happiness. Here is a bottle which he brought me from a foreign country.'

As she poured out the two glasses, I remarked

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—in order to say something—that the food and drink in foreign countries were quite different from ours.

'They are not as good,' said she decidedly. 'You will perhaps have heard about Carême, since you are on such friendly terms with the good lady of Monsieur de Talleyrand. Well, Carême is a pupil of his cook, the famous Boucher. And the day will come when Carême will himself be famous. He has large ideas. He will revolutionise the world of pastry. He will—anyhow he is my love.' She raised her glass. I did the same. 'Suppose,' she said, 'we drink to both of them, to Lartiffe and Carême? May happiness be with them evermore. . . . How do you like the liquor? Lartiffe drinks a glass or two, of this one or another one, when he has had his cognac.'

I assured her I would not forget.

'I hope you love the man?' she asked, as she sat down and placed her hands upon her knees. 'He is the kind of man,' she said, 'who makes you love him.'

'He is in tremendous favour with Napoleon,' I said.

'And long may it continue. Let us drink one more to that,' she said.

When

at last the document was written he delayed to sign it. For a cautious diplomat the signature is everything. Until you have appended it you can draw back entirely. Therefore it is usual for them to put off signing till the latest moment. But when Talleyrand for two days had been nearly suffocating he was begged by Abbé Dupanloup to sign. Before he would commit himself he said he must refresh his memory as to the contents of it. So the Abbé read it him, he said it was quite satisfactory, he put it in his pocket, but he did not sign. Later on he promised he would do so the next morning very early, between five and six. Some visitors arrived, he entertained them with his views on Joachim du Bellay, the old poet, and with a comparison of the great wines of France. The visitors departed and he sank into a lethargy. They were afraid that every hour would be his last. At five o'clock next morning he refused to sign and ultimately, after six, he took his pen and in a flowing hand wrote his full name. He then lay in a state of absolute prostration till the afternoon, when he received a visit from the King. Louis Philippe was very deeply moved, so much so that he could not speak; but Talleyrand

 aroused

aroused himself sufficiently to thank the King for the great honour he was showing to that house. On the same day he died.

From Louis Philippe I return to talk about Napoleon. I would sooner have the ashes of Napoleon than the fat body of our present King. And as we made our way, my grandson and myself, to where we could see the procession I was telling him about the Emperor. I thought that he paid more attention to the crowd than to my story. After all, though, he had never seen—no more had I—so great a multitude. One heard the speech of all the provinces of France and even foreign languages. It was a dreadful day, with eight degrees of cold; the slush and snow made walking very difficult, but no one cared. At last I saw that the procession was approaching. Men and officers came clad in their old uniforms, of the Republic and the Empire. Then the funeral carriage—we exclaimed: 'Vive l'Empereur!' And what was my delight when little Charles took from his pocket a white, imitation lilac flower—which he had cut, without my knowledge, from a dress of mine—and threw it, to be trampled in the slush, of course. I did not know until that moment how I loved the boy.

 When

Battles, battles, battles—what has been the use of them? '

'Your father would have risen from a bed of sickness and he would have stayed all night, if necessary, in the snow. He will be there! When the ashes of Napoleon are carried to their resting-place,' I said, 'then all his veterans will follow them.'

'They will not wet their feet,' said Xavier. 'You are not as young as once upon a time.'

He should have known that all his efforts would be unavailing. I had absolutely settled to be present. If he and his fashionable friends preferred, then let them spend that holy day inside a coffee-house. I did not utter a reproach. If I had done so, he would probably not have allowed me to take little Charles, his boy. I wanted more than anything to have my grandson with me.

In the end it was arranged that Charles and I should wrap ourselves up very carefully and go into the streets. This expedition causes me to open my old diary once more. I see that it is six and thirty years since last I wrote. Two years ago, in 1838, I nearly put in it about the death of Talleyrand. But it was only told to me by someone. I was not myself

a wit-

a witness of the spectacle—how he dictated his confessions and repented very thoroughly —and then withdrew a part of what he had admitted, saying that this lapse or that would certainly be overlooked by God, because of the loose morals of the period. Every clause of the confession he was haggling over, till the people round his bed became impatient. One of them said solemnly that Talleyrand, who was in a decrepit state of health, might even die before he put his name upon the gravest document which he had ever signed. When he made treaties, such as that of Lunéville, he managed them so that, by sales and purchases of articles the treaty dealt with, he accumulated a vast fortune. Such a thing he could not do in this case, but he was determined to enjoy himself. He acted just as if he were negotiating with an earthly monarch. Whereas in diplomacy it is an axiom that one makes as good a bargain as one can, so in this, on which depended the salvation of his soul, he had recourse to all the subtleties and artifices which in other days he had so skilfully employed. He weighed each sentence of the recantation, he suggested variants, he gave to understand that he might break the business off and when

for his behaviour; it was very clear, she said, that he belonged to the low classes. He flung back at her that she was lying, as he was a marshal and a duke. These arguments were very inauspicious for their married life.

Lartiffe and I were much more sensible. We chattered and we laughed and were extremely happy.

'I am glad,' said he, 'yes, I am glad that we are married. As the good Archbishop put it, we are the two children who have been united.'

'What he meant,' said I, 'was that we are God's children.'

'How I hope that we shall have some!' he burst out. 'I feel that you and I should——'

'Let us talk of something else,' I said, 'if you do not object.'

'Oh, certainly,' said he. 'I heard about a school. The master's wife made him be kind to all those who were tradesmen's sons. Then once a year the parents used to send a gift. There was a little boy who came each morning in a carriage and went home in it; but no one knew his father's business.'

'Now, Lartiffe,' I said—his eyes were shining —'I have a suspicion what it was.'

'And

'And you are right,' said he, 'quite right. They got a letter from the parents of the boy, who said that they were grateful for the master's kindness. They had recently acquired some nice, new girls and took this opportunity of sending a free ticket for a creole woman. As the master's wife was economical she did not want to waste the ticket; but she also did not want her husband to make use of it. She said that they would send it to the grocer, who would surely recompense them with additional supplies of jam and tea.'

XXXI

This twenty-third of December of 1840

My son was not at all in favour of me going out into the streets. He said there would be a tremendous gathering of people. All the roughs of Paris would be there, said he.

'And those who have great memories,' I said.

'If there were anything to see, then I would not object,' quoth he. 'One does not even see his ashes.'

'Xavier,' I answered, 'I am sorry that you do not understand. If your father were alive——'

'He would be if it were not for Napoleon.

drove back to my house. Lartiffe was obviously in embarrassment, for he did not cease tugging his moustache. It would have been more amiable on my part to have made it easier for him, but with the noises of our wheels and of the horses on the cobble-stones I would have been obliged to give him silent consolation and I felt I did not know him well enough for that. So, as I could not occupy myself with him, I floated in a haze of meditations.

When we reached the house my dearest Marthe was waiting for us. She was altogether motherly, but we were both of us constrained. I wondered for how many days the poor man would be so unnatural. I did not have to wonder very long. While Marthe was there I heard him muttering several times: 'The devil take me!' And as soon as she had vanished for the night he started to his feet, tore open at the neck his uniform and glared at me.

'Suppose,' I said, 'we let in some of the night air?'

'But what I feel,' he said, 'is that—how does one say—I feel that this is terrible. Excuse me, but I am like that.'

'Please

'Please calm yourself, my friend,' I begged of him.

'Madame——'

'Will you not call me by my name, dear—Xavier?' This was the first time I had used the word. I think his ex-wife never used it.

'If I were a writing person,' he explained, 'one of those officers who sit and write, it would be different. But I am not like that at all. I am a man of—I am one who acts. Ha! those writing ones!' he laughed out loudly. 'They have great advantages. If you had known Massenoir!'

'He was one of your companions?' I enquired.

'Well, it was he who did the writing of the regiment. His table was a fearful place, a veritable mound of papers. They were lying here and lying there, a thousand of them, and as high as—you cannot imagine it. We used to say that if he were to kill a man, then he could put the corpse upon that table. Nobody would ever find it.'

So the ice between us two was broken and we speedily were on the best of terms. I have been told about another marriage such as ours, which had a lamentable start. On the first night the lady was reproaching him

for

had ascertained when he would be away on duty. At the house Madame Lartiffe herself came to the door. She was as big as the lieutenant and her face was red and shiny. Both her sleeves were rolled up to the elbows. She had been at work.

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'But is that love,' I asked, 'which can be ordered?'

'Well, oh well,' she said in a bewildered way. Then suddenly her doleful sea of shadows was illuminated by a brilliant harbour-light. 'As for love,' she said, 'my Carême calls a soup the "well-beloved of the stomach." He was much afflicted when he heard that the Marquis de Cussy,[1] prefect of the palaces and a

[1] Judging from an essay by this gentleman, which is included in Fayot's *Les Classiques de la Table* (Paris, 1843), he seems to have been misunderstood, for in that he says distinctly that he is not against a moderate amount of soup. Although he declares it to be the nourishment of women, children and aged persons, yet if one is hungry he pronounces it to be as beneficial as a few handfuls of good earth cast upon the surface of the land on which you mean to sow. The Marquis, who alludes to Carême as 'grand maître,' touches in this brief essay on many points. 'Cooking is an ancient art,' he says, 'which goes back to Adam.' He does not trouble to give us his authorities; but we

 reputed

reputed gourmet, argued that one has no need of soup. Considering that Carême has a multitude of recipes—he hopes to get five hundred—he quite naturally disagreed. "I am not a classic," said Carême. "I have—and God be thanked—destroyed too much and built it up again; but there is one thing in which I can brook no alteration and that is at the commencement of dinner to partake of a small quantity of soup, some well-descended, unobtrusive soup."'

are glad to learn that Apicius was considered to be a master of the science, because he discovered how to retain the freshness of oysters; and that Anthony, being pleased with a dinner, presented his cook with a town. We are subsequently told of the Barbarians who lived on 'horrible ragoûts' and of the Arab invaders who, according to the Marquis, could not remain by the Mediterranean shores of Europe because they were forbidden to drink wine. It may be that the Marquis does not possess 'all the excellencies that narration can admit,' which in Johnson's opinion was the case with Richard Knolles' *History of the Turks;* but he has much of interest to say. 'The English Government,' says he, 'which we copy, for it is so positive, so powerful and so vivacious, has gained a considerable influence over Parliament by means of dinners. . . . Out of the midst of the kitchen smoke which envelops London the statesmen of England direct the world. . . . From the time of Walpole it is eating which has in London been the basis of representative government.'—*Trans.*

The

XXX

This second of Nivôse (twenty-third of December) of 1804

THE divorce was carried through most rapidly, since we were to be married in the Emperor's presence and he did not know how soon he would be setting out for Milan.[1] But in order to display his pleasure at the marriage he was dressed in his imperial costume, the white satin vest and pants, the white shoes with the gold rosettes and the red velvet coat, embroidered lavishly with gold and diamonds. He carried on his breast a diamond star and round the feathers of his hat there also was a band of diamonds. It was an unbecoming costume for a small, fat man. It made him look as if he were the King of Diamonds.

I should have said that this was in the evening at nine o'clock. I had been fetched in a great carriage with four horses and we drove to the Archbishop's palace. On the stairs of it were men in livery, a row of them at either side and each one holding up a torch. But after the

[1] He went there in the first part of 1805 and, with almost indescribable magnificence, was crowned with the iron crown of the ancient Lombard Kings.—*Trans.*

first

first moment I was not afraid. It would have been dishonouring my ancestors.

Napoleon was in the chapel, actually there before me. At his elbow was the groom, with a great deal of oil upon his hair, and facing them were the Archbishop and the other clergy, who included Cousin Bernard. The resplendent Emperor was telling them, most kindly, how he meant the Church to act.

When he perceived me he continued with his exposition, but appeared to talk more quickly than he had been doing. I looked at the clergy, and so far as I could see not one of them so much as glanced in my direction, for the Emperor was holding them completely.

'. . . and that is what I have resolved,' he said. 'Madame,' he turned to me, 'you have assisted at a notable discussion. Let us now proceed to private matters. It is owing to his own desire that he is a lieutenant still, because I wanted yesterday to give him his promotion. He requested me to let him earn it on the field of battle. Gallant fellow! He shall have no lack of chances and if he does not ascend into the highest ranks I will be very much surprised. Now we are going to celebrate this wedding.'

The

The Archbishop and the other clergy grouped themselves and Lartiffe took his place beside me. . . . As the ceremonial was in progress my own thoughts flew back to long ago, when Cousin Bernard used to be my teacher in the history of France. It was the fourteenth Louis he had loved to talk about. But if he were to give instruction to some other children—mine, perhaps—would he not sooner tell about Napoleon? My heart was melting at the thought of the vast greatness of this man, who told archbishops how the Church should act, who made lieutenants into generals and marshals, who commanded all the country, cast a shadow over other countries and had deigned to bring about my marriage. There was thus a link between myself and this tremendous man.

'Let us thank God,' said the Archbishop, 'that He has united His two children.'

Most devoutly did I thank Him. But I doubted whether one could call Napoleon a child of God. Was he not something more than that? At last I found that I was standing up. The Emperor had been obliged to leave the ceremony in the middle of it. And upon my husband's arm I left the chapel.

We did not say much to one another as we

drove

drove back to my house. Lartiffe was obviously in embarrassment, for he did not cease tugging his moustache. It would have been more amiable on my part to have made it easier for him, but with the noises of our wheels and of the horses on the cobble-stones I would have been obliged to give him silent consolation and I felt I did not know him well enough for that. So, as I could not occupy myself with him, I floated in a haze of meditations.

When we reached the house my dearest Marthe was waiting for us. She was altogether motherly, but we were both of us constrained. I wondered for how many days the poor man would be so unnatural. I did not have to wonder very long. While Marthe was there I heard him muttering several times: 'The devil take me!' And as soon as she had vanished for the night he started to his feet, tore open at the neck his uniform and glared at me.

'Suppose,' I said, 'we let in some of the night air?'

'But what I feel,' he said, 'is that—how does one say—I feel that this is terrible. Excuse me, but I am like that.'

'Please

'Please calm yourself, my friend,' I begged of him.

'Madame——'

'Will you not call me by my name, dear—Xavier?' This was the first time I had used the word. I think his ex-wife never used it.

'If I were a writing person,' he explained, 'one of those officers who sit and write, it would be different. But I am not like that at all. I am a man of—I am one who acts. Ha! those writing ones!' he laughed out loudly. 'They have great advantages. If you had known Massenoir!'

'He was one of your companions?' I enquired.

'Well, it was he who did the writing of the regiment. His table was a fearful place, a veritable mound of papers. They were lying here and lying there, a thousand of them, and as high as—you cannot imagine it. We used to say that if he were to kill a man, then he could put the corpse upon that table. Nobody would ever find it.'

So the ice between us two was broken and we speedily were on the best of terms. I have been told about another marriage such as ours, which had a lamentable start. On the first night the lady was reproaching him

 for

for his behaviour; it was very clear, she said, that he belonged to the low classes. He flung back at her that she was lying, as he was a marshal and a duke. These arguments were very inauspicious for their married life.

Lartiffe and I were much more sensible. We chattered and we laughed and were extremely happy.

'I am glad,' said he, 'yes, I am glad that we are married. As the good Archbishop put it, we are the two children who have been united.'

'What he meant,' said I, 'was that we are God's children.'

'How I hope that we shall have some!' he burst out. 'I feel that you and I should——'

'Let us talk of something else,' I said, 'if you do not object.'

'Oh, certainly,' said he. 'I heard about a school. The master's wife made him be kind to all those who were tradesmen's sons. Then once a year the parents used to send a gift. There was a little boy who came each morning in a carriage and went home in it; but no one knew his father's business.'

'Now, Lartiffe,' I said—his eyes were shining —'I have a suspicion what it was.'

'And

'And you are right,' said he, 'quite right. They got a letter from the parents of the boy, who said that they were grateful for the master's kindness. They had recently acquired some nice, new girls and took this opportunity of sending a free ticket for a creole woman. As the master's wife was economical she did not want to waste the ticket; but she also did not want her husband to make use of it. She said that they would send it to the grocer, who would surely recompense them with additional supplies of jam and tea.'

XXXI

This twenty-third of December of 1840

My son was not at all in favour of me going out into the streets. He said there would be a tremendous gathering of people. All the roughs of Paris would be there, said he.

'And those who have great memories,' I said.

'If there were anything to see, then I would not object,' quoth he. 'One does not even see his ashes.'

'Xavier,' I answered, 'I am sorry that you do not understand. If your father were alive——'

'He would be if it were not for Napoleon.

Battles, battles, battles—what has been the use of them? '

' Your father would have risen from a bed of sickness and he would have stayed all night, if necessary, in the snow. He will be there! When the ashes of Napoleon are carried to their resting-place,' I said, ' then all his veterans will follow them.'

' They will not wet their feet,' said Xavier. ' You are not as young as once upon a time.'

He should have known that all his efforts would be unavailing. I had absolutely settled to be present. If he and his fashionable friends preferred, then let them spend that holy day inside a coffee-house. I did not utter a reproach. If I had done so, he would probably not have allowed me to take little Charles, his boy. I wanted more than anything to have my grandson with me.

In the end it was arranged that Charles and I should wrap ourselves up very carefully and go into the streets. This expedition causes me to open my old diary once more. I see that it is six and thirty years since last I wrote. Two years ago, in 1838, I nearly put in it about the death of Talleyrand. But it was only told to me by someone. I was not myself

a wit-

a witness of the spectacle—how he dictated his confessions and repented very thoroughly —and then withdrew a part of what he had admitted, saying that this lapse or that would certainly be overlooked by God, because of the loose morals of the period. Every clause of the confession he was haggling over, till the people round his bed became impatient. One of them said solemnly that Talleyrand, who was in a decrepit state of health, might even die before he put his name upon the gravest document which he had ever signed. When he made treaties, such as that of Lunéville, he managed them so that, by sales and purchases of articles the treaty dealt with, he accumulated a vast fortune. Such a thing he could not do in this case, but he was determined to enjoy himself. He acted just as if he were negotiating with an earthly monarch. Whereas in diplomacy it is an axiom that one makes as good a bargain as one can, so in this, on which depended the salvation of his soul, he had recourse to all the subtleties and artifices which in other days he had so skilfully employed. He weighed each sentence of the recantation, he suggested variants, he gave to understand that he might break the business off and when

at

at last the document was written he delayed to sign it. For a cautious diplomat the signature is everything. Until you have appended it you can draw back entirely. Therefore it is usual for them to put off signing till the latest moment. But when Talleyrand for two days had been nearly suffocating he was begged by Abbé Dupanloup to sign. Before he would commit himself he said he must refresh his memory as to the contents of it. So the Abbé read it him, he said it was quite satisfactory, he put it in his pocket, but he did not sign. Later on he promised he would do so the next morning very early, between five and six. Some visitors arrived, he entertained them with his views on Joachim du Bellay, the old poet, and with a comparison of the great wines of France. The visitors departed and he sank into a lethargy. They were afraid that every hour would be his last. At five o'clock next morning he refused to sign and ultimately, after six, he took his pen and in a flowing hand wrote his full name. He then lay in a state of absolute prostration till the afternoon, when he received a visit from the King. Louis Philippe was very deeply moved, so much so that he could not speak; but Talleyrand

aroused himself sufficiently to thank the King for the great honour he was showing to that house. On the same day he died.

From Louis Philippe I return to talk about Napoleon. I would sooner have the ashes of Napoleon than the fat body of our present King. And as we made our way, my grandson and myself, to where we could see the procession I was telling him about the Emperor. I thought that he paid more attention to the crowd than to my story. After all, though, he had never seen—no more had I—so great a multitude. One heard the speech of all the provinces of France and even foreign languages. It was a dreadful day, with eight degrees of cold; the slush and snow made walking very difficult, but no one cared. At last I saw that the procession was approaching. Men and officers came clad in their old uniforms, of the Republic and the Empire. Then the funeral carriage—we exclaimed: 'Vive l'Empereur!' And what was my delight when little Charles took from his pocket a white, imitation lilac flower—which he had cut, without my knowledge, from a dress of mine—and threw it, to be trampled in the slush, of course. I did not know until that moment how I loved the boy.

 When

XXXII

This third of June of 1858

When my grandson Charles, now twenty-four years old, confided in me that he was in love and that he meant to marry her and that before he said a word about it to his parents (who would probably object) he wanted me to look at his beloved—well, there was no happier woman than myself in Paris.

I decided that in honour of this great event I would unlock my diary again and write a final page. It would make a very seemly ending, how the two young people came to beg for an old woman's benediction.

Nowadays my periods of sleep and wakefulness are like the mottled surface of the sky, with racing clouds and moon. I have so many little periods of meditation. During them I thought it out, the way in which this chapter should be written—an account of her sweet bashfulness and Charles' manly bearing and my own words of encouragement. It was peculiar that everything occurred exactly as I had foreseen.

Yet I am bound to make another entry, which

does

does not so much remind me of a vesper bell. It happened yesterday and in the afternoon that I received a visit from a serious young man, with very tidy whiskers. He had brought an introduction—I forget who gave it him—and as I find such difficulty now in reading he explained that he, a grandson of Paul Garnier, was writing a biography of the good patriot. Of course he knew that I had been acquainted with his grandsire. Would I be so gracious as to give him any details I remembered?

It was most amusing to have there in front of me the grave, young grandson of my lover.

'You will scarcely credit me,' I said, 'but since he went away from Paris I have lost all trace of him and of his family.'

'The patriot,' this young man said, 'was destined to survive his marriage for a very little time. He had no real ailment, but he gradually ceased to live.'

'When one has been accustomed,' I remarked, 'to Paris it is rather dangerous to start the quiet country life. I should be glad,' I said, 'if you would wheel this chair of mine up to the window. Then we shall be looking at the scene he used to like.'

'Did you see him often, did you see a good

 deal

deal of him,' asked the young man, 'that is after he had left his high political position?'

'Yes,' I said, 'I saw a good deal of him.'

The young fellow had his note-book lying open on the little table. He turned to the last page, which was obviously the index, then he found another page and made some entry. I had pleasure in the contemplation of his head. There was a reminiscence round the temples of his grandfather.

'What is your name?' I asked.

'Monsieur Guillaume Potteret,' he said.

'Then, Monsieur Guillaume Potteret,' said I, 'let us proceed.'

'In his early days, when he was living on your property, that of your family. . . .'

My thoughts were wandering. Do not people say that the last love one has may be the grandest, but it will be very sombre? There was something most attractive in the movements of this throat, especially with gleams of sunlight falling on it. . . .

He had put a question.

'Yes,' I said.

'You go there still, from time to time,' he said, 'to your old home?'

'My son administers them both,' said I, 'that

pro-

property and also my first husband's—after some vicissitudes the place returned to me. But I prefer to end my days in Paris.'

'Was it in your early home,' he asked, 'that my dear grandfather announced his views?' He poised the pen.

I told him I must think, because all that was very long ago. And as I thought I speculated on the outline of this young man's chin. He could develop into a heroic lover. But no, no! I am obliged to sit in the wheeled chair. Let me not be a prey to foolish fancies. I was only there to testify.

'Your grandfather,' said I, 'was——'

'Yes.' He looked up from his writing. 'I have got his character exactly. It was perfect, with no shadows anywhere.'

'Is that not very hard to write about?' I asked.

'But why?' The young biographer appeared to be surprised. 'I shall depict him as he was quite simply. When he rose to power he made it plain how much he loved his land and people.'

I was irritated. 'You forget,' I said, 'that he caused many of the people—scores and hundreds—to be guillotined!'

'Around

'Around a great man there will always gather,' Monsieur Guillaume said, 'some little, noxious scandals.'

'From your tone,' I said, 'it seems that you intend to overlook them.'

'That is so,' said the biographer. 'They are not worth refuting. You must be aware of it, since you were privileged to know him, that Paul Garnier was like a mediæval knight. France was the mistress that he served.'

'You writers are so wonderful,' I said.

'We do our best,' said Monsieur Guillaume modestly.

'I heard about a writer once,' I said, 'who told a friend that he was going to the East with fifty camels and with fifty concubines. The friend remarked that certainly the camels would be forced to do a great deal of hard work.'

The young man rose and seized his hat. 'Excuse me, but I think,' he said, 'if I may say so, that you must have changed since you associated with my grandfather, the patriot.'

'It is a changing world,' I said. 'Should we be glad or sorry?'

'That depends,' said he. 'Good-bye.' He

 strode

strode towards the door in such a way that it reminded me of Serroquin.

'Young man,' I said, 'your action is like that of Serroquin [1] when he was walking round, before a race.'

He turned and stared at me.

'But I am talking of the famous Serroquin,' I said, 'the one of 1842. That was a horse!'

'Indeed!' said Monsieur Guillaume.

[1] This was one of the horses which belonged to Lord Henry Seymour, an Englishman who played a very prominent part in the establishment of racing in France. Between the years 1828 and 1833 he won 58 prizes out of 163 and out of 508,800 francs he secured 189,300. He was the younger son of the third marquis of Hertford, who is best remembered as the original of Thackeray's Marquis of Steyne. This Lord Hertford married Maria Fagniani, daughter of the Marchesa Fagniani and adopted daughter of George Augustus Selwyn, said to have been a wit and politician (1719–1792), who in Parliament was not merely silent but nearly always asleep, except when taking part in a division. He voted with the Court party and was suitably rewarded. A dispute between him and the Duke of Queensberry as to the paternity of Marie Fagniani was never settled. They both left her large sums at their deaths. This fortune was inherited by her son Lord Henry Seymour, who seems to have spent his entire life in Paris. He was noted for his eccentricities. Dying unmarried he bequeathed money for the support of four favourite horses who were never again to be saddled and left the residue, about £36,000 a year, to Paris hospitals.—*Trans.*

'Mine

'Mine was Serroquin the Second, a good creature, but without that freedom in his movements.'

Guillaume's face was worth while studying.

'You do not seem to know,' I said, 'that I have several horses. They have given me a great deal of amusement and I never paid more than five thousand francs for any of them. When your grandfather was here——'

'My grandfather had other things to do,' said Guillaume in a rigid voice.

'The Jockey Club did not exist in France,' I said, 'and so he did the other things.'

'Good-bye again,' said Monsieur Guillaume.

'Let me hope,' I said, 'that you have not been too much disappointed in me. I have only given you a small amount of information.'

Guillaume bowed. 'I am obliged to you,' he said.

'Here is some information that is really useful, if you like to risk a hundred francs or so,' said I, 'upon that chestnut filly out of——'

It would have been wiser of him if he had not slammed the door. The chestnut filly won that race.